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Max Shachtman:

THE NATURE OF THE RUSSIAN STATE

James T. Farrell:

Discussion of A First Novel

Irving Howe:

How "Partisan Review" Goes to War

The Post-War World — Balance Sheet and Prospects

*Resolution of the Workers Party on the
International Situation*

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE NATURE OF THE RUSSIAN STATE

By Max Shachtman 99

UNITY—WILL IT WORK

By Albert Goldman 106

HOW PARTISAN REVIEW GOES TO WAR

By Irving Howe 109

DISCUSSION OF A FIRST NOVEL

By James T. Farrell 111

RESOLUTION ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE

By Workers Party 114

CORRESPONDENCE 124

ANTI-SEMITISM AND THE POLISH PEOPLE

By Edward Findley and Ernest Erber..... 127

JOINT STATEMENT ON UNITY

In 1940 an internal struggle in the Socialist Workers Party resulted in a split, the Minority forming the Workers Party as an independent organization. The split has continued up to the present time.

Attempts made in recent times to find a basis for the unification of the two parties satisfactory to both sides, given the existence of the recognized disagreements on a number of important questions, did not meet with success and the discussions of the project were discontinued.

QUESTION OF UNIFICATION REOPENED

In recent days the question was opened again. New discussions between the leading committees of the two organizations have taken place. On February 10, the National Committee of the WP presented a written declaration in favor of unification. In this declaration the National Committee of the WP obligated itself to accept the decisions of an Extraordinary Party Convention projected for the coming fall. This obligation was undertaken with the understanding that the WP, like the SWP, would have the right to participate in the pre-convention discussion and to be represented at the EPC with full rights and in proportion to its numerical strength; and that fusion of the two organizations into a united party would be achieved. On this basis, the WP pledged itself to abide by the discipline of the united party, politically as well as organizationally, even if the EPC should adopt decisions which would place the members of the WP in the position of a minority.

The plenum of the National Committee of the SWP, meeting in New York, February 15-16, accepted this declaration as providing a realistic basis for unity and unanimously voted in favor of unification on this basis. In view of the WP declaration, the plenum of the SWP on its part agreed that the WP should have the right to participate in the preparatory discussion of the EPC in a special discussion bulletin which will be distributed to the members of both parties. This discussion is to be completed in the branches of the separate organizations before the formal unification.

COMMITTEES RECOMMENDED UNITY OF PARTIES

As to the specific forms of the proposed unification, it has been agreed by both sides that the members of the WP and the SWP, as of February 10, 1947, as well as all those recruited by each party subsequent to that date, shall be admitted into the ranks of the united party as a body, without prejudice or discrimination. However, while the unity negotiations are in progress, neither party will admit into its ranks any individuals or groups who are now or who have formerly been members of the other party, except by agreement. During the same period it is agreed that no exclusive measures will be taken by either party against any members or groups in its ranks in disciplinary cases arising out of the discussion on unity without consultation with the other party.

On the basis of the agreements and conditions outlined above, the two National Committees are recommending the unification of the two parties. If this recommendation is approved by the members of the two parties, as preliminary consultation indicates is most probable, the formal unification will take place as soon as the discussion now proceeding in the ranks of the two organizations is concluded. In the meantime, a joint committee of the two organizations has been established, which is empowered to organize and arrange a program of cooperation and joint activities of the two parties in all possible fields of the class struggle, designed to lead up to and prepare the way for the informal unification.

JAMES P. CANNON,
For the National Committee of the
Socialist Workers Party

MAX SHACHTMAN,
For the National Committee of the
Workers Party

New York, March 11, 1947.

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The Nature of the Russian State

Bureaucratic Collectivism and the Marxist Tradition

The theory that Russia is neither a capitalist nor a workers' state but rather a bureaucratic collectivist state meets an initial resistance from all Marxists, with some of whom it is prolonged more than with others. This is perfectly natural and understandable. Our party adopted this theory only after a long and thoroughgoing discussion. We have no right to complain when others move at an even slower pace, or even if they refuse to move in our direction at all.

Those who resist our theory base themselves upon their understanding of the teaching of Marx. In a well known passage in his *Critique of Political Economy*, Marx wrote:

The bourgeois relations of production are the last antagonistic form of the social process of production—antagonistic not in the sense of individual antagonism, but of one arising from conditions surrounding the life of individuals in society; at the same time the productive forces developing in the womb of bourgeois society create the material conditions for the solution of that antagonism. This social formation constitutes, therefore, the closing chapter of the prehistoric stage of human society.

If capitalist society is the last antagonistic form of the social process of production, and if it creates the material conditions for the solution of this antagonism by the socialist society which is to be established by the working class—it is legitimate to ask what part is played in this Marxian system by our theory, bureaucratic collectivism not only is not socialism but does not represent a workers' state of any kind. At the same time, we hold, it is not a capitalist state. Finally, by characterizing bureaucratic collectivism as a reactionary, exploitive, and therefore also an antagonistic society, it is implied that capitalism may not be the last antagonistic social formation. Paraphrasing Trotsky, the Socialist Workers Party Statement thereupon declares that our theory "would signify that not the workers but a new bureaucratic class was destined to displace dying capitalism." It then charges that "Shachtman . . . intervened and interposed a new class between the capitalists and the proletariat, thus reducing Marxism to utopian levels."

The questions raised are serious and weighty. There is no doubt whatsoever that they involve an appraisal of the whole question of the collapse of capitalism and the future of socialism—and thus of the future of mankind itself. Such questions deserve thought and the most objective discussion, not on the low level of ignorance and demagoguery to which the problem is so often depressed but on the heights to which Marxism necessarily raises it. On these heights, it is possible to examine carefully and then to re-establish clearly the theoretical tradition of Marxism. This requires patient and earnest study, scrupulous objectivity and the application of the Marxist method itself.

"In broad outlines," wrote Marx in the sentence immediately preceding the passage already quoted from the *Critique*, "we can designate the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal, and the modern bourgeois methods of production as so many epochs in the progress of the economic formation of society." (My emphasis—M. S.)

"In broad outlines," but only in broad outlines! Like many such statements by Marx, this must not be construed in the rigid, dogmatic, mechanical sense against which Marx himself found it necessary to admonish his followers time and time again. It must not be construed as an absolute truth. Marx indicates here the "principal epochs in the economic formation of society," listing them, as he writes elsewhere, "in the order in which they were determining factors in the course of history." Marx would be the first one to reject the idea that every people in the world passed and had to pass from primitive communism through all the stages he indicated, one following in inexorable succession after the other, and ending, after the collapse of capitalism, in the classless communist society of the future. Such a mechanical interpretation of Marx, although not uncommon among Marxists, has nothing in common with Marxism.

No "Iron Pattern" of Social Orders

Like everyone else acquainted with the history of society, Marx knew that there were stages in the development of communities, peoples and nations which could not be fitted into any pattern of iron succession. Where, in such a pattern, would we fit those "highly developed but historically unripe forms of society in which the highest economic forms are to be found, such as coöperation, advanced division of labor, etc., and yet there is no money in existence, e.g., Peru," about which Marx wrote (*Critique of Political Economy*, p. 296)? Where, in this iron pattern, would we fit the régime of Mehemet Ali, the viceroy of Egypt in the early nineteenth century who was the sole owner of the land and the sole "industrialist," from whom all had to buy—a régime referred to in one of the works of Karl Kautsky? Where in this iron pattern would we fit any one of a dozen of the antique Oriental régimes which Marx himself placed in a special, exceptional category? The list can be easily extended.

Marx found himself obliged on more than one occasion to protest against all the absolutist constructions placed upon his materialist conception of history both by uninformed friends and uninformed adversaries. It is not without interest that many of his protests referred not only to interpretations made by Russian writers but to the way they applied Marx's ideas (as they interpreted them) to Russia. One of the most valuable and instructive documents of Marxism is a letter by Marx, unfortunately not widely known, to a Russian

Populist acquaintance, "Nikolai-On" (N. F. Danielson). In the letter Marx deals with an article written by another and very well known Russian Populist, N. K. Mikhailovsky, who attributed to Marx that very mechanistic schema of social development which Marxists have always had to contend against, and which we must now seek to eliminate from the Trotskyist movement as well. The length of the quotation, as the attentive reader can see, will be more than justified by the appropriateness of its contents:

Now what application to Russia could my critic draw from my historical outline? Only this: if Russia tries to become a capitalist nation, in imitation of the nations of Western Europe, and in recent years she has taken a great deal of pains in this respect, she will not succeed without first having transformed a good part of her peasants into proletarians; and after that, once brought into the lap of the capitalist regime, she will be subject to its inexorable laws, like other profane nations. That is all. But this is too much for my critic. He absolutely must needs metamorphose my outline of the genesis of capitalism in Western Europe into a historico-philosophical theory of the general course, fatally imposed upon all peoples, regardless of the historical circumstances in which they find themselves placed, in order to arrive finally at that economic formation which insures with the greatest of productive power of social labor the most complete development of man. But I beg his pardon. He does me too much honor and too much shame at the same time. Let us take one example. In different passages of *Capital*, I have made allusion to the fate which overtook the plebeians of ancient Rome.

Originally, they were free peasants tilling, every man for himself, their own piece of land. In the course of Roman history, they were expropriated. The same movement which separated them from their means of production and of subsistence, implied not only the formation of large landed properties but also the formation of large monetary capitals. Thus, one fine day, there were on the one hand free men stripped of everything save their labor power, and on the other, for exploiting this labor, the holders of all acquired wealth. What happened? The Roman proletariat became not a wage-earning worker, but an indolent mob, more abject than the former "poor whites" in the southern lands of the United States; and by their side was unfolded not a capitalist but a slave mode of production. Hence, strikingly analogical events, occurring, however, in different historical environments, led to entirely dissimilar results.

By studying each of these evolutions separately, and then comparing them, one will easily find the key to these phenomena, but one will never succeed with the master-key of a historico-philosophical theory whose supreme virtue consists in being supra-historical. (THE NEW INTERNATIONAL, November, 1934, p. 110. f.)

Engels, writing to the same Danielson on February 24, 1893, added: "I subscribe completely to the letter of our author [Marx]. . . ."

Views of Engels and Mehring

Like Marx himself, his great co-workers found more than one occasion to protest against the vulgarization of the materialist conception of history worked out by the two founders of scientific socialism. Mehring, reading from the Berlin *Vorwärts* (October 5, 1890), quotes from an article in which Engels found it necessary, not for the first time and not for the last time, to correct bourgeois misinterpreters of Marx's concept, in the hope that it would be better understood by Marx's followers:

The materialistic method is transformed into its opposite when it is employed not as a guide to the study of history, but as a finished stencil in accordance with which one accurately cuts the historical facts.

To this declaration of Engels, Mehring himself adds:

Historical materialism is no closed system crowned with an ultimate truth; it is a scientific method for the investigation of human development.

Is not the attempt to cut the *fact* of Stalinist society into "a finished stencil," in which there is room only for capitalist state or workers' state, a perfect example of the transformation of Marx's materialistic method into what it is not and cannot be?

The view that Marxism presents an absolute schema of an iron succession of social orders which holds good for all peoples and all times; which excludes any intermediate stages, any leaps over stages, any retrogression into previous stages or any bastard social formations distinguished from the "principal epochs in the economic formation of society"; and which by the same token also excludes—and that absolutely—any unique social formation interposed between capitalism and a workers' state or between a workers' state and socialism (as, for example, the social *reality* which we have in the form of the Russian bureaucratic collectivist state)—that is a view that does Marx "too much honor and too much shame at the same time." Such a view necessarily converts Marx's "outline of the genesis of capitalism in western Europe into a historico-philosophical theory of the general course, fatally imposed upon all peoples, regardless of the historical circumstances in which they find themselves placed." Marx's materialist conception of history in *no way* "rules out" in advance, by theoretical interdiction, as it were, our theory of bureaucratic collectivism. That theory was arrived at "by studying each of these evolutions separately, and then comparing them," in order to "find the key" to the *unique* phenomenon of Stalinist society. When Marx wrote that "one will never succeed" in understanding such a social phenomenon as faces us in Russia today by means of "the master-key of a historico-philosophical theory whose supreme virtue consists in being supra-historical," it is as if he foresaw the hopeless dilemma, the growing confusion and political impotence of those who seek to force-fit Stalinist Russia into an iron pattern for which Marx bears no responsibility. To those who charge us with a "revision of Marxism," we will not retort that it is they who are revising Marxism. It suffices to reply that only those who do not understand Marx's materialist conception of history and Marx's method can attribute to him such an absolutist theoretical absurdity.

How Marxists Answered Michels

Neither Marx nor Engels could foresee the actual course of the Russian proletarian revolution, or the historical circumstances under which it took place. They had no need and there were no grounds for speculative writing on the possibility of the degeneration of a proletarian revolution confined to a backward country or on the form that this degeneration might take. In our own century, the question of degeneration of the revolution and the forms of its degeneration has been posed more than once, even before 1917. Is a classless communist society even a possibility? Can the proletarian revolution produce anything more than a victory only for the revolutionists who lead it? Best known of those who contended that the *socialists* may be victorious, but *socialism* never, was Robert Michels. In face of the reality of the Stalinist degeneration, more than one "disillusioned" revolutionist and more than one turncoat have proclaimed that Michels' theory has been confirmed by history.

How have Marxists dealt with such theories as Michels'? By the simple pious assertion that an anti-capitalist but non-socialist state is an absolute impossibility, that it is ruled out theoretically by Marxism? Let us see how the problem is discussed by so authoritative a Marxist as the late N. I. Bukharin in one of his best-known works which was written in the earli-

est period of the Bolshevik revolution and served as a textbook, so to speak, for a whole generation of Marxists.

Referring to Engels, Bukharin points out that in all past societies there were contending classes, and therefore a ruling class, because of the "insufficient evolution of the productive forces."

... But communist society is a society with highly developed, increased productive forces. Consequently, it can have no economic basis for the creation of its peculiar ruling class. For—even assuming the power of the administrators to be stable, as does Michels—this power will be the power of specialists over machines, not over men. How could they, in fact, realize this power with regard to men? Michels neglects the fundamental decisive fact that each administratively dominant position has hitherto been an envelope for economic exploitation. This economic exploitation may not be subdivided. But there will not even exist a stable, close corporation, dominating the machines, for the fundamental basis for the formation of monopoly groups will disappear; what constitutes an eternal category in Michels' presentation, namely, the "incompetence of the masses" will disappear, for this incompetence is by no means a necessary attribute of every system; it likewise is a product of the economic and technical conditions, expressing themselves in the general cultural being and in the educational conditions. We may state that in the society of the future there will be a colossal over-production of organizers, which will nullify the stability of the ruling groups. (N. I. Bukharin, *Historical Materialism*, p.310.)

This holds, however, and in our view it holds unassailably, for the communist society, one in which the productive forces have indeed been so highly developed and increased, and are available in such abundance, as to make even the highest level of the development of the productive forces attained by capitalism appear as miserably inadequate as it really is. But does it also hold for the transitional period that necessarily intervenes between the end of capitalism and the full flowering of communism? Obviously not. On that score there is not and, of course, there cannot be any disagreement.

But the question of the transition period from capitalism to socialism, i.e., the period of the proletarian dictatorship, is far more difficult [continues Bukharin]. The working class achieves victory, although it is not and cannot be a unified mass. It attains victory while the productive forces are going down and the great masses are materially insecure. There will inevitably result a tendency to "degeneration," i.e., the excretion of a leading stratum in the form of a class-germ. This tendency will be retarded by two opposing tendencies; first, by the growth of the productive forces; second, by the abolition of the educational monopoly. The increasing reproduction of technologists and of organizers in general, out of the working class itself, will undermine this possible new class alignment. The outcome of the struggle will depend on which tendencies turn out to be the stronger." (N. I. Bukharin, *Ibid.*, p. 310, f.)

Take note especially of the two very precise formulations of Bukharin. One: "there will inevitably result a tendency of 'degeneration,' i.e., the excretion of a leading stratum in the form of a class-germ." So far as we know, it occurred to nobody to denounce Bukharin as a "revisionist" for writing this, even though he wrote it long before so much as the outlines of the present Stalinist state could be visible. Bukharin is, of course, not referring to a new capitalist class that would be excreted when he writes of "a class-germ." He is writing, let us remember, of Michels' theory of a new bureaucratic class that would triumph as a result of the socialist revolution, and Bukharin does not hesitate to acknowledge—this almost thirty years ago!—that this is theoretically possible. Bukharin does not begin to deny that the formation of such a new class is possible. He acknowledges the tendency. He promptly adds two of the

counteracting tendencies. And his conclusion? He does not even suggest, as the SWP Statement does, that the triumph of socialism is guaranteed by some abstraction, by some absolute force. Not for a minute! He concludes—this is his second formulation of importance to us—"The outcome of the struggle will depend on which tendencies turn out to be stronger." Or, if we may formulate it in the way which excited so much horror in the "monists" of the Socialist Workers Party, "The question of the perspective of Stalinism cannot be resolved in a purely theoretical way. It can be resolved only in struggle." The theoretical tradition of Marxism is represented in the manner in which Bukharin deals with the problem but not at all in the manner in which the SWP "monists" reject the "pluralism" which they ascribe to us.

Rakovsky Saw "Class of Rulers"

Marx wrote before the Russian Revolution, and Bukharin wrote before the Stalinist society appeared as an organized whole and even before Stalinism itself made its appearance. The Trotskyist opposition has been the eye-witness of the rise of Stalinism and has been the only one to make a serious analysis of it. Next to Trotsky, the late Christian Rakovsky was the outstanding leader of the Trotskyist movement. After expulsion from the party and exile, Rakovsky wrote many penetrating analyses of Russian society under Stalinism. Given the conditions of his existence in that period, many, if not most, of his studies are probably irretrievably lost. But we have sufficient indication of the trend taken by his analysis prior to his tragic capitulation. What this trend was, was reported, in its time, in the international Trotskyist press. Writing about "The Life of the Exiled and Imprisoned Russian Opposition," N. Markin (Leon Sedoff) gave the following information:

Concerning the bureaucracy, Comrade Rakovsky writes: "Under our very eyes, there has been formed, and is still being formed, a large class of rulers which has its own interior groupings, multiplied by means of premeditated cooptation, direct or indirect (bureaucratic promotion, fictitious system of elections). The basic support of this original class is a sort, an original sort, of private property, namely, the possession of state power. The bureaucracy 'possesses the state as private property,' wrote Marx (*Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Law*)." (*The Militant*, December 1, 1930.)

There is, furthermore, ample evidence to show that Rakovsky's view was supported by not a few of the Trotskyists exiled and imprisoned by Stalin. The whole of Rakovsky's analysis is not at hand, neither are the whole of his conclusions; and it may well be that we shall never see them. But the trend of his analysis is sufficiently clear; the Stalinist bureaucracy is a new class based upon "an original sort of private property." It is a ruling class that derives its power from its complete domination of the state which owns all the means of production and exchange. Whatever may have been the thoughts which preceded or succeeded the section from Rakovsky's manuscript which Markin quotes, it is plain enough that Rakovsky's point of view is, if not identical with our own, at least analogous to it. Yet the publication of Rakovsky's views as long ago as 1930 did not bring down upon his head any such puerile denunciations of "revisionism" as we hear today. Trotsky did not propose that the International would have to separate itself from Rakovsky because of his views on the new bureaucratic class in Russia; and no such proposal came from anyone else in the Trotskyist movement. It occurred to nobody to set up the new "criteria" for membership in the Trotskyist movement which the Cannonites have now set up.

How Trotsky Posed the Question

Finally, Trotsky himself. He held, of course, to the position that Stalinist Russia still represented a workers' state, even if in degenerated form. He denied that Stalinist Russia represented either a capitalist state or a new social formation like bureaucratic collectivism. But he *did not exclude* the theoretical possibility that a bureaucratic collectivist state could come into existence.

At the very beginning of the war, on September 25, 1939, he warned: "Might we not place ourselves in a ludicrous position if we affixed to the Bonapartist oligarchy the nomenclature of a new ruling class just a few years or a few months prior to its inglorious downfall?" Trotsky firmly expected the solution of the problem of Stalinism by means of the triumph of the revolutionary proletariat in *direct connection* with the crises of the world war. That is completely clear in his polemics against us in 1939-40. "If this war provokes, as we firmly believe, a proletarian revolution, it must inevitably lead to the overthrow of the bureaucracy in the USSR and regeneration of Soviet democracy on a far higher economic and cultural basis than in 1918. In that case, the question whether the Stalinist bureaucracy was 'a class' or a growth on the workers' state will be automatically solved." Further, he wrote, that "it is impossible to expect any other more favorable conditions" for the socialist revolution than the conditions offered by the experiences of our entire epoch and the current new war. But suppose the proletarian revolution does not triumph in connection with the war, and suppose the Stalinist bureaucracy maintains or even extends its power? Trotsky did not hesitate to pose this question too—and to give a tentative answer to it. "If, contrary to all probabilities, the October Revolution fails during the course of the present war, or immediately thereafter, to find its continuation in any of the advanced countries; and if, on the contrary, the proletariat is thrown back everywhere and on all fronts—then we should doubtless have to pose the question of revising our conception of the present epoch and its driving forces. In that case it would be a question not of slapping a copy-book label on the USSR or the Stalinist gang but of reevaluating the world historical perspectives for the next decades if not centuries: have we entered the epoch of social revolution and socialist society, or, on the contrary, the epoch of the declining society of totalitarian bureaucracy?"

Thus, while Trotsky rejected the theory that Russia is a bureaucratic collectivist state, he did not, and as a Marxist he could not, rule out the possibility of a bureaucratic collectivist society on the basis of an *a priori* theory, or a "monistic concept" which we are now asked to believe is Marxism.

"We may have socialism, we may have Stalinism—who knows? Only the 'concreteness of the events' will show. In the theoretical sphere this is the most serious break possible with Marxist ideology." That is how the SWP Statement presents our view and condemns it, all in the name of a muddle it calls monism. Why not equally derisive condemnation of Trotsky? He writes, so that anyone who reads may understand, that if, "contrary to all probabilities," but *not* contrary to all *possibilities*, this, that, or the other thing does happen, or this, that, or the other thing does not happen ("the concreteness of the events will show!"); the Marxists, in undisciplined defiance of the interdiction by the Socialist Workers Party, will indeed have to pose the question: is it the epoch of socialism or the epoch of Stalinism? Different answers may be given to this question. Different conclusions may be drawn from those

drawn by Trotsky or by us or by the Socialist Workers Party or by anyone else. Those are matters subject to the most objective and sober discussion. But it should be obvious that the way in which Trotsky *approaches* the problem is thoroughly Marxist, whereas the way in which the SWP approaches the problem is mechanistic and mystical (these are not mutually exclusive!) and utterly non-Marxist. The authors of the Statement are simply not at home in the theoretical tradition of Marxism.

Stalinist Russia can be understood only "by studying each of these evaluations separately and then comparing them." To analyze it we need no "historico-philosophical theory whose supreme virtue consists in being supra-historical." We need only the "master-key" of historical materialism, not in the sense of a "closed system crowned with an ultimate truth," but as a scientific method, as a guide to the study of the real history of the Stalinist state, as the method by which its social anatomy can be laid bare.

II

A Break with Marxism?

Our theory of the class character of the Stalinist state, we are admonished, represents a break with Marxism, because we hold that Russia is neither working class nor capitalist but bureaucratic-collectivist. But that is not the worst of our crimes. According to the Cannonites, we continue to deepen our break with Marxism. In our 1941 resolution on the Russian question, we wrote—as they correctly quote—that "bureaucratic collectivism is a nationally-limited phenomenon, appearing in history in the course of a singular conjuncture of circumstances." What has been added to this that makes our break with Marxism "deeper"? An analysis of the events that have occurred since 1941. The events represent an unforeseen and hitherto unanalyzed phenomenon, so far as Stalinism is concerned. They are a refutation, and a thorough one, of the predictions made by Trotsky on the basis of which the Cannonites continue to operate with an elevated disregard for reality.

Up to the outbreak of the Second World War, Stalinism represented a state that grew out of the proletarian state established by the Bolshevik revolution. It was a successor not to capitalism but to a revolutionary workers' state. It represented a triumph not over a capitalist state but a triumph over the working class and its revolutionary state. We may disagree on a dozen different aspects of the problem of Stalinism, but there is no conceivable basis for a difference on this simple fact. We may disagree on the conclusions to draw from the fact that the Stalinist state replaced not a capitalist state but the state of Lenin and Trotsky, but on the fact itself there can be no disagreement.

What, however, is new in the development of Stalinism since the outbreak of the war? Some people prefer not to be troubled with or even reminded of the facts which the entire world, both bourgeois and proletarian, is thinking about and discussing. It upsets them. It is much more convenient and infinitely less disturbing to repeat over and over again what was said yesterday, mumbling the same ritualistic formulae like pious people saying their beads over and over again and always in the same order. The trouble is, whether we like it or not, there are new beads to account for. Stalinism has successfully extended its state control over new countries. The régime in such countries as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania is now identical in every respect with the régime of pre-war and post-war Stalinist Russia. In Yugoslavia, the Stalinists are in

the process of establishing fundamentally the same type of state as exists in Stalinist Russia. In Poland, substantially the same holds true. In other Balkan countries where the Stalinists have gained domination, they are also engaged in establishing social régimes identical with the one that exists in Russia.

Stalinists Overthrow Bourgeoisie

The triumph of Stalinism in all these countries has not occurred in the same way and on the same basis as in Russia. In these countries Stalinism did not succeed a proletarian revolution. In these countries there was no revolutionary workers' state for Stalinism to crush. In these countries Stalinism triumphed over a bourgeois state and over a subject, not a ruling, proletariat. It expropriated, both politically and economically, the bourgeoisie and the landowning classes, or else it is in the process of expropriating them, and nationalized their property. The idea that the bourgeoisie rules in *any* sense, be it economically, politically, socially or in any other way, is a grotesque absurdity. This absurdity may be swallowed by some ignorant people in the movement, but there is not a bourgeois in the entire world, let alone a bourgeois in these countries themselves, whom you could begin to convince that his class is still in power in any sense.

We doubt if it will be asserted that in the countries conquered by Stalinism a classless socialist society exists. If the bourgeoisie is not in power in these countries, what class is in power? What class rules?

Let us lay aside for the moment the question of what class rules in these countries, so long as it is agreed that the bourgeoisie does not rule. The transference of social power from one class to another is the outstanding characteristic of a revolution (or a counter-revolution). Such a transfer of power has taken place in these countries. Now, if we agree, as we must, that the rule of the bourgeoisie has been overturned in these countries; and if we agree further, as we must, the fact that the state established in these countries is substantially identical or is, at the very least, becoming identical with that which exists in Russia; and finally if we accept the Cannonite theory that Stalinist Russia represents a degenerated workers' state—then the conclusion is absolutely inescapable: a workers' state, partly degenerated or wholly degenerated or degenerated in any other way, has been established by Stalinism in the conquered countries of eastern Europe.

The conclusion would not necessarily alter the view that Stalinism is bureaucratic. That is granted. But it would necessarily destroy fundamentally the theory that Stalinism is counter-revolutionary—in the sense in which the Cannonites apply that term to Stalinism. For, in the narrow Cannonite concept, the term counter-revolutionary must be and is applied only to those social or political forces that are not merely anti-socialist and anti-working class but—by that very token, as it were—also pro-capitalist; that is, those forces which work either subjectively or objectively for the preservation of bourgeois society and the rule of the bourgeoisie. How reconcile this with the fact that Stalinism has wiped out or is wiping out the class rule of the bourgeoisie? How reconcile it with the view—which follows relentlessly from the SWP definition—that Stalinism has established a workers' state in bourgeois countries? If that altogether too much abused word "dialectics" were to be manipulated a thousand times more skillfully than it is, it could not extricate the SWP from its dilemma.

Unlike the Cannonites, we have sought to analyze the reality by means of the materialist method and to introduce those corrections or supplements into our theory which the reality

demands of us. The Stalinist state is no longer confined to Russia. Bureaucratic collectivism has been established in other countries as a result of a triumph over the capitalist class, over the capitalist state of these countries. The pseudo-Marxist who contents himself, as Lenin once remarked contemptuously with "swearing by God," finds no need to concern himself with the problem because for him the problem simply does not exist. To the serious Marxist the problem of yesterday is posing today in a new form: what is the future of the Stalinist state? what is the perspective of Stalinism, in relation, on the one side to the future of capitalism and, on the other side, to the perspective of socialism?

We will not at this point set forth the analysis of this problem made by the Workers Party in its 1946 convention resolution. For the moment, we will only repeat one of the conclusions which the SWP Statement quotes:

The question of the perspective of Stalinism cannot be resolved in a purely theoretical way. It can be resolved only in struggle.

And again:

Whether or not Stalinism can triumph in the capitalist world cannot be denied absolutely in advance. To repeat, it is a question of struggle.

These sentences, which are nothing but simple ABC, first evoke that sarcasm which the Cannonites express with such mastery. They write: "It is clear that our slogan, 'Socialism or Barbarism,' should now be amended to read: 'Socialism, Bureaucratic Collectivism or Barbarism!'" This is a telling blow, and while we are reeling from it, stiffer blows are rained down upon us. Sarcasm is not their only strong point. Theory, philosophy—they are at home in these fields as well.

"Monism" Versus "Pluralism"

In 1946, by adopting the above-quoted resolution, the Workers Party rejected the heart of the Marxist system: its *monistic concept*. Marxism holds that we live in a world of law, not of pure chance. This is true not only of the natural world, but also of human society. Shachtman (as usual, in passing) substitutes for Marxism an idealistic philosophy of *pluralism*: We may have socialism, we may have Stalinism—who knows? Only the "concreteness of the events" will show. In the theoretical sphere this is the most serious break possible with Marxist ideology. . . . The perspective of the Trotskyist movement, based on Marx's world outlook embodied in the *Communist Manifesto*, is discarded by the Workers Party in favor of an idealistic "multiple factors" concept, which is far closer to "True Socialism" than to Marxism.

There it is, word for word. The reader will just have to believe that it is not invented by us but simply quoted from the original. The cross of "True Socialists," who have been dead and decently buried for a good century now, we will bear without too much murmur because it exerts not an ounce of weight upon our shoulders. As any reader who *knows* something about "True Socialism" is aware, the only reason it was thrown in was to impress the easily impressionable with a display of erudition which an impolite smile should suffice to dispose of. But what is said about "monism" in general and our "pluralism" in particular, that is a little too much. You avert your eyes in embarrassment at the spectacle that this section of the human race which is in the revolutionary moment can sometimes make of itself. Where do the authors of the Statement get the courage to be so confident in their pernicious illiteracy? Do they really think that there is nobody left in the world to laugh his head off at this pompous jargon, this cool mauling of Big Words and Big Thoughts? It is positively painful to have to deal with such nonsense, which

cannot even be termed philosophical mumbo-jumbo because it is just plain, ordinary, uninspired and very puerile mumbo-jumbo. But we have no choice in the matter.

What is the heart of the Marxist system? Its monistic concept. What is our most serious possible break with Marxist "ideology"? An idealistic philosophy of pluralism, which we have substituted for Marxism and, as usual, in passing. And just how have we substituted pluralism for Marxism? By saying that capitalism exists as a social reality; that socialism exists, if not yet as a reality, then, in any case, as a perspective; and—here is our sin—that Stalinism and bureaucratic collectivism exist both as a reality and as a perspective. To this we have added the other sinful thought: the perspective of Stalinism cannot be resolved in a purely theoretical way—it can be resolved only in struggle; it is wrong to deny absolutely in advance the possibility of the triumph of Stalinism in the capitalist world because that question can be decided only in the course of struggle.

That, you see, is the idealistic philosophy of pluralism. What, then, is monism, the heart of the Marxist system?

Engels' Reply to Duehring

The development of Marxian thought has known its share of the "monism" that our authors are babbling about. Every real student of Marxism is acquainted with Frederick Engels' polemical destruction of Eugen Dühring who—the truth is the truth—although also given to pompous phrasemongering, nevertheless stood intellectually a cubit above all ordinary phraseurs.

All-embracing being is *one* [wrote Duehring]. In its self-sufficiency it has nothing alongside of it or over it. To associate a second being with it would be to make it something that it is not, namely, a part or constituent of a more comprehensive whole. We extend, as it were, our *unified* thought like a framework, and nothing that should be comprised in this concept of *unity* can contain a duality within itself. Nor again can anything escape being subject to this concept of unity. . . .

To which Engels replied in a famous passage: "If I include a shoe brush in the unity of mammals, this does not help it to get lacteal glands. The unity of being, that is, the question of whether its conception as a unity is correct, is therefore precisely what was to be proved, and when Herr Dühring assures us that he conceives being as a unity and not as twofold, he tells us nothing more than his own unauthoritative opinion."

What is the monistic concept of Marxism? In the same *Anti-Dühring* Engels sets forth *all* there is to monism, in the fundamental sense, so far as Marxists are concerned:

The unity of the world does not consist in its being, although its being is a pre-condition of its unity, as it must certainly first *be*, before it can be *one*. Being, indeed, is always an open question beyond the point where our sphere of observation ends. The real unity of the world consists in its materiality, and this is proved not by a few juggling phrases, but by a long and tedious development of philosophy and nature science.

It is not necessary to read this passage more than once to understand that what the Cannonites have written is *pretentious gibberish*, and nothing more. This is not a harsh but a very restrained judgment.

Let us amend this judgment—but only to show how restrained it really is. Let us try to surmount the insurmountable in order to see if any sense can be made out of the nonsense. In other words, are the Cannonites actually trying to say something and if so, what is it? By painstakingly piecing

together some elements of the muddle, we may be able to find out what idea it is they are trying to convey.

Our "pluralism," our "idealistic multiple factors concept" consists in the opinion that "we may have socialism, we may have Stalinism—who knows?" in addition to our opinion that what we actually have in most of the world is capitalism. As the Cannonites put it so devastatingly, we hold that the old "monism" should now be amended to read: "Socialism, Bureaucratic Collectivism or Barbarism." Whoever says that more than one of these three is actually or theoretically possible in the course of the development of society, sets himself down as a pluralist. So far, so good.

And the monist—what does he say? He says, true monist that he is, true defender of the heart of the Marxist system that he is, true partisan of the perspective of the Trotskyist movement that he is, he says that he holds, without amendment, to "our slogan" and that slogan is (hold your breath, the lights are about to be turned on): "Socialism or Barbarism!"

Blinding light! Pluralism equals three and probably more than three. Monism equals—two. Anyone who does not understand this is an idiot, probably a congenital one. Anyone who disagrees with it, let him beware.

How Marx and Engels Viewed Future

In their first program, Marx and Engels declared that capitalism was a historical society, that it had no basis for permanent existence, that its doom was inevitable, that it would be succeeded by barbarism or socialism. They left us very little of a detailed picture of what socialism would be or what barbarism would be, because they rejected the kind of utopian and unscientific thinking that would try to paint such a picture. As Engels said, "Being, indeed, is always an open question beyond the point where our sphere of observation ends."

Our sphere of observation today is far more comprehensive than it was in the days of Marx and Engels. It includes the living phenomenon of Stalinism. Stalinism is precisely one of the forms of barbarism which has manifested itself in the course of the decay of a society which the proletariat has not yet succeeded in lifting onto a rational plane. Marx and Engels did not and could not foresee the Stalinist barbarism. What they could not foresee, we have the duty to see and to analyze. What does this imposing babble about "monism" aim to convey? That Stalinism is not a social phenomenon? That Stalinism is not a reality? That Stalinism is not a material part of the world today? "The real unity of the world consists in its materiality," said Engels. Stalinism is not socialism and it is not capitalism, but it is nevertheless a material part of the *real* (and therefore contradictory) unity of the world.

Can barbarism triumph over socialism? Of course it can! Is that triumph *theoretically* possible? Of course it is! If you deny this, you convert the scientific formula, "Barbarism or Socialism," into mere soap-box agitation, and demagogical agitation at that. Can the question of the perspective (the prospects) of barbarism "be resolved in a purely theoretical way"? Can the question of the triumph of barbarism "be denied absolutely in advance"? Whoever tries to answer that question in a "purely theoretical way," whoever tries to deny it "absolutely in advance," reads himself out of the circles of scientific Marxist thought. He may well remain a socialist, he may well continue to favor the ideal of socialism, but he is no longer *fighting* for this ideal inasmuch as he has denied theoretically and absolutely and in advance the very possibility of any

other development except socialism. By this denial, he no longer *needs* to fight for socialism. It will come of itself and its triumph is absolutely guaranteed.

The Struggle as Final Test

In the same sense, is it theoretically possible that bureaucratic collectivism—the Stalinist barbarism—can triumph over capitalism? Of course it is. Can this triumph be denied absolutely in advance? Not by Marxists! But far, far more important than this is our conclusion that the perspective (again, the prospects) of capitalism and socialism and Stalinism *can be resolved only in struggle*. How else? Whoever believes that the perspective is automatically guaranteed (one way or another) by some sort of mysterious natural process which unfolds without the *decisive* and *determining* intervention of the living struggle of the classes—there is the man who has rejected the heart of Marxism and committed the most serious break possible with Marxism. He belongs among those philosophers for whom Marx had such scorn because they only contemplate or analyze the world, but do nothing—or find no need to do anything—to change it. If he nevertheless calls himself a Marxist, he would do well to reflect on the teachings of the old masters on this vital point.

"The question if objective truth is possible to human thought," Marx wrote in his famous second thesis on Feuerbach, "is not a theoretical but a practical question. In practice man must prove the truth, that is, the reality and force, the this-sidedness of his thought. The dispute as to the reality or

unreality of a thought, which isolates itself from the praxis is a purely scholastic question." (Appendix to Engels, *Ludwig Feuerbach*, etc., Vienna, 1927, pp. 73 f.)

The necessity or, if you like, the *inevitability*, of socialism is demonstrable only in "praxis," that is, it is a matter that can be resolved only in the course of the class struggle.

"The empiricism of observation alone can never sufficiently prove necessity. *Post hoc*, but not *proctor hoc* (Enz, I, 84). This is so very correct that it does not follow from the constant rise of the morning sun that it will rise again tomorrow, and in actuality we know now that a moment will come when the morning sun *does not rise*. But the proof of necessity lies in human activity, in experiment, in labor; if I can do this *post hoc*, it becomes identical with the *proctor hoc*." (Engels, *Dialektik und Natur*, Marx-Engels Archiv, Vol. II, p. 282.)

It would be instructive to learn from our authors, who seem determined to make monism synonymous with mumbo-jumbo, just how, in their view, the perspective of Stalinism will be resolved. If it is not to be resolved, as we say, "only in struggle" (or, as the early Marxists would say, in praxis), then we must conclude that the fate of Stalinism will be resolved theoretically or by some other pure and simple thought processes. Alas, if the doom of Stalinism depended only on the thought processes and in general upon the theoretical wisdom of the Cannonites, a bright future might well be guaranteed for it.

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Unity — Will It Work?

Problems of WP-SWP Fusion

The sudden decision on the part of the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party in favor of unity obligates us to attempt answering the question: will it work? Before the SWP leadership changed its position on unity, the answer to that question, although important, was not pressing. There was no use spending much time on it so long as we got no statement from the leaders of the SWP as to whether or not the theoretical and political differences between the two parties prevent fusion.

Ever since the question of unity was raised we have been basing our position in favor of unity on the proposition that the differences on political and organizational questions should not prevent unity. We contended that unity is demanded by the fact that the existence of two revolutionary parties with anti-capitalist programs that are almost identical and with immediate demands for the American scene that are practically the same, is very confusing to the advanced workers of this country; it is demanded by the fact that unity would eliminate wasteful duplication, greatly strengthen our forces and create the possibility of growth which two parties fighting each other do not possess. It is, perhaps, this latter factor which is all-important. For if we were to concede that two separate parties could grow as fast as one united party, the advisability of unity, in view of the important political differences that exist, would be somewhat problematical.

If we assume, as we should, that the leaders of the SWP accept, at present, the same general propositions in favor of unity, it would appear that no obstacle to fusion exists and, hence, we should immediately proceed to unification. Unfortunately there are factors the existence of which prevent the problem from being as simple as all that.

It was only in November of last year that a convention of the SWP was presented with a document prepared by the Political Committee of that party, enumerating at least ten good and sufficient reasons which, in the opinion of the highest body of the party, demanded firm opposition to unity. If we were not the revolutionary scum of the earth, according to that document, we were certainly close to it.

The convention almost unanimously adopted a resolution against unity. It is true that the resolution, in addition to mentioning the political differences, also referred to the alleged lack of good faith on our part in proposing unity. But it is nevertheless also true that the overwhelming emphasis was placed on the question of political differences, real and imaginary.

One should not ignore the fact that the personal animosities aroused by the factional fight of 1940 and the consequent split, still exist; one should not ignore the fact that the very question of unity led to factionalism in the SWP and to an intensification of the strained relationship between the parties. We had previously proposed a period of collaboration as a means to get the membership accustomed to working together and thus help eliminate the prevailing animosities. There is nothing like a common picket line or a joint meeting or demonstration to show that the ideas which unite us are at least just as powerful as those which divide us. The acceptance of the idea of a period of collaboration prior to unity is under

the circumstances absolutely essential and we consider it a good omen that the SWP leaders have agreed to this idea.

Collaboration, although it can prepare the ground for unity, cannot assure a fruitful unity after fusion is accomplished. It would indeed be tragic if, immediately after unity, a factional fight breaks out with the possibility of another split. A very frank discussion of all the main obstacles—political and organizational—to a fruitful unity is one way to prepare the ground for such a unity.

Political Differences—No Obstacle

That, to a certain extent, the political differences between us and the SWP are more serious now than they were at the time unity was first broached must be frankly recognized. We thought that for the SWP the question of the defense of Russia had receded into the background. But now the leaders of the SWP have shoved it way into the foreground. The question whether to support the Stalinist camp or the Mikolaczuk camp in Poland had not arisen when unity was first proposed. Once more we must examine and see whether any of the political questions is likely to give rise to a bitter factional dispute.

Only insofar as the question of the nature of the Russian state has a bearing on the question of the defense of Russia can it cause any heated controversies. Within the Workers Party there are three viewpoints on this question and there is not heated controversy about it because we all are opposed to the defense of Russia.

From the point of view of a possible factional struggle the question of the defense of Stalinist Russia is far more serious than the question of the nature of the Russian state. As I said before, one of the premises of the resolution on unity was the conclusion of the SWP, after the Stalinist army was on German soil, that the slogan of defense had receded into the background. The SWP leaders have pushed that slogan into the foreground and are of the opinion that a war of the capitalist nations against Russia is imminent.

Nevertheless the WP is of the opinion that, taking all the circumstances into consideration—and among them are the improbability of an early conflict between Russia and the Anglo-American coalition as well as the advantages of unity—it is better to unite, even though unity may mean the necessity of refraining from voicing our opposition to Russian imperialism in public, during a war.

A serious difference that did not exist at the time when the resolution on unity was first introduced by the SWP minority is the one dealing with the "Polish" question. It is clear that should any civil war break out between a Stalinist government such as exists in Poland and a nationalist movement led by bourgeois democrats, having the support of the majority of the workers and peasants, we would give critical support to the struggle for national independence and bourgeois democracy against Stalinist totalitarianism. The SWP would advocate support of Stalinist totalitarianism. On this question, as on the one involving the defense of Stalinist Russia, the comrades of the WP recognize that they are now in the minority and if they should continue to be in the minority

they are willing to take the consequences, that is they are willing to refrain from advocating their position in public.

As convinced as I am that defending Stalinist totalitarianism in any way, shape or form is a crime against the socialist revolution, I am of the opinion that a split is not justified on this issue, primarily because it does not directly concern the American working class. The American workers will not be set into motion by any slogan for or against the defense of Russia or Stalinist Poland. I think a slogan in favor of defense disorients the advanced workers on the question of the nature of socialism but it is far from fatal. The American workers will be mobilized on questions that deal with the American scene or they will not be mobilized at all. If they should be mobilized on the question of war it will not be on the question of a specific war against Russia.

An exceedingly important tactical difference which stems from a difference in outlook on the Russian state and on Stalinism is the one dealing with the attitude we should assume to the Stalinists in this country—especially in the trade unions. The SWP generally favors support of and united fronts with the Stalinists as against those who might be called social-democrats (Reuther). The WP takes a contrary position.

A united front with the Stalinists, in the generally accepted meaning of a united front, presents no great problem for the simple reason that the Stalinists would not enter into united fronts with Trotskyists. In the unions, however, there are situations where rank and file Stalinists are willing to enter into agreements with us. In such cases there may be a controversy as to the desirability of an agreement in a particular situation but I visualize no great difficulties in dealing with the general problem. Supporting Stalinist candidates in elections is a more serious problem, but here too the WP comrades are willing to assume the burdens of a minority.

The above differences constitute the most important ones. When the Workers Party declares that it is for unity it means that the members have considered the question and are willing to assume the responsibilities of a minority until such time that they will convince the majority of the united party to their ideas of correct theory and political strategy. The differences that have been enumerated are, by themselves, no obstacle to unity, in the opinion of the Workers Party.

Organizational Differences

It is well known that the differences in organizational theories and practices between the SWP and our party add up to different concepts of the nature of a revolutionary party. Both parties believe in the principle of democratic centralism but so differently do they define this idea and apply it in practice that it offers a particularly good illustration of the meaninglessness of a general principle under certain conditions.

Are the practical or theoretical organizational differences likely to become serious barriers to a fruitful unity?

In recent conversations with the leaders of the SWP with reference to unity we were told that a condition of unity is that we refrain, after unification is achieved, from discussing disputed questions subsequent to a decision on them by an Extraordinary Party Convention. We deem it necessary to point out that in our party there is no such stringent rule and that we consider it the best practice to leave the door open for discussion even after a convention and a decision.

This does not mean that we do not accept the general principle that a convention decision on a disputed question ends the discussion until the next convention. We accept that

rule as a general principle and apply it so that anyone who thinks he has anything new to say can continue to discuss the question in an educational manner.

It is necessary to make a distinction between a pre-convention discussion during which questions are discussed as part of the routine of the branch for the purpose of a convention decision and a post-convention discussion where those who think they have something new to add are welcome to do so in the form of articles in a discussion bulletin or even in the theoretical magazine. Nor is there a hard and fast rule that a discussion cannot be held in a branch on any question previously decided upon by a convention. We leave that matter to a decision by the branch. A point of order to rule out a discussion on a question because of a convention decision would be laughed out of court by the vast majority of our members.

It is also necessary to make a distinction between a theoretical question a decision upon which does not require a specific action and a question where a decision does require such action. A resolution adopted by a convention on the nature of the Russian state does not mean that a member is not permitted to write or speak on that question before the next convention. As a matter of fact, articles have appeared in our monthly magazine arguing for a position contrary to the one held by the majority of our party. We do not favor the idea that our members should stop thinking and writing about the nature of the Russian state because a majority at a convention voted for a certain concept of that state.

Nor do we see any valid reason for putting a stop to a discussion even on such a question as the defense of Russia. Such a course might be justified when there is a war against Russia but not when the slogan is essentially one for the future.

The general rule that is accepted by the majority in our party is probably the following: that discussions should be permitted on questions that have been decided so long as they do not interfere with some party campaign or action resulting from the decision. Even that rule is only a very general one and should not be applied strictly.

New events are constantly occurring; must one get the permission of the National Committee to discuss them? Only if one wants to raise a discussion for the purpose of having the party call a convention to decide the question. In such a case it is necessary to follow the constitutional provisions for the calling of a special convention. But if one simply wants to discuss the significance of some new event and others want to answer and participate in the discussion they should all be encouraged to do so.

To use the sharpest possible phrase and one which may be utilized against us, we can say that we believe in "permanent discussion," in the sense that we believe in a party where every member feels obligated to give thought to all the problems confronting us and to express his thoughts in writing or in speech. Does not discussion interfere with practical activity? To a certain extent it probably does. But discussion is part of the work of the party and just as necessary as the "practical" part of party activities. Here and there someone in the party discusses to an excess; here and there someone becomes impatient with any discussion. But these are exceptions and we can say without boasting that in our party there is an exceedingly healthy attitude to the problem of discussion as an essential part of party activity.

And the difference between the parties is not only that we have a far greater freedom of discussion; our discussions are of a far freer nature than those in the SWP. We take seriously

the idea that Marxism is not a dogma but a guide to action; that it is a method of analyzing social relations and not a set of beliefs to be repeated over and over again. As a result, tradition does not play as much of a role with us as it does with the SWP. As a result, there is far less reliance on quotations from Marx, Engels, Lenin and Trotsky. There are no looks of astonishment and disapproval if some comrade questions the correctness of the great teachers of socialism. An independent, critical attitude is respected and not met with sneers and jeers. We firmly believe that the spirit of Marxism is nothing if it is not critical.

Factions and Factional Organs

On the question of the right of a group of members to organize a faction and to issue a factional organ, our party accepts Trotsky's position as he propounded it in an article in *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL* of October, 1939. We believe that it is best to avoid the creation of factions but we consider that the best method of preventing the creation of factions is to offer such freedom of discussion that serious comrades will think a long time before organizing a faction.

In the article mentioned above, Trotsky does not specifically state that he believes in the right of a faction to issue its own organ whenever it wants to do so. But that is clearly implied.

It seems as if the leadership of the SWP takes the position that permission must first be obtained before a faction can be organized. Or it believes that a faction can be organized but it cannot issue its own organ without permission. This is clearly reversing the traditional position of Bolshevism on the question of factions. In 1921 the Russian Bolshevik Party prohibited factions. Regardless of the correctness or incorrectness of the policy adopted, it shows that the normal procedure was to permit factions. It was only the exceptional conditions of the time that led Lenin to go to the extent of prohibiting factions. Trotsky constantly stressed the fact that this was an exceptional measure. To make a rule of what everyone considered an exception is to violate the letter and spirit of Bolshevism.

There are a number of differences on the organizational question which may not be so important as the ones already mentioned but which clearly indicate different views of the nature of the party.

In our party I feel free to write a letter criticizing the position taken by an editorial in our press. In one instance I have actually done so. This is out of the question in the SWP, where a leading comrade is not supposed to disagree openly with the line of an editorial or even with the line of another leading comrade.

In the SWP, articles from a minority viewpoint can appear in the theoretical organ only on stated occasions (very infrequent ones). In our party such articles can appear at any time. In the SWP, a discussion bulletin is marked "For members only" and the secrecy of the internal discussion bulletin is jealously guarded. We, on the contrary, take the position that we have no political secrets from anyone, especially the masses. Our discussion bulletins are open to everyone interested.

In our party, a member who does not believe in the correctness of the theory accepted by the majority is under no obligation to defend that theory in public. He is only required not to agitate for his own theory in public. I do not accept the theory accepted by the majority of our party that Russia is a bureaucratic collectivist state. I have no hesitation in my pub-

lic lectures to state that fact. Such an honest attitude to non-party people is almost incomprehensible to the large majority of the SWP comrades.

There are tendencies to leader-worship in the SWP which would not be tolerated for one moment in the WP. A recent example of placing the leader in a separate and higher position is to be found in the manner in which a serious mistake made by a *Militant* editorial was corrected. An editorial appeared in *The Militant* calling Ruth Fischer an informer because she told the truth about the GPU agent Eisler before a Congressional committee. After almost six weeks of silence an editorial article appeared, written by Cannon, admitting that a mistake was made.

Why was it necessary for Cannon to write and sign the article correcting the mistake? Was not the proper procedure to have an editorial correcting the mistake previously made through an editorial?

Is it not implied, by having Cannon write a special editorial, that the leader of the party is not implicated in the mistake previously made? Is there not the implication that only an unknown editor is capable of making such a mistake?

I am certain that in our party a mistake, if made in an editorial, would be corrected in the same way, or by a statement of the Political Committee.

An Essential Condition to a Fruitful Unity

Are any or all of the organizational differences so serious that they would threaten unity after it is achieved? The answer is an emphatic negative, provided (1) the minority is willing to abide by the decision of the majority during the time it is trying to win a majority to its side, and (2) the majority does not prevent the minority from leading a free ideological life of its own.

The second point needs further explanation. For good or ill, the WP consists largely of a group of revolutionists intensely interested in all of the many serious problems confronting the revolutionary movement. To expect them to retire into the background and to keep silent simply because a convention decided against them is to insult their intelligence and revolutionary integrity.

The WP is willing to abide by the decision of the Extraordinary Party Convention on all of the questions raised above—political and organizational. The members of the WP are assuming the risk that the Extraordinary Party Convention will decide against them on all of the questions upon which there are differences. For the sake of unity and the advantages to be derived from it they are willing to assume that risk, in the hope, of course, that they will succeed ultimately in winning over a majority to their conceptions.

When unity was first broached the WP declared its willingness to abide by the decisions of the majority. In that respect there has been no change whatever in the position of the WP. At that time the WP demanded only the recognition of the right of a minority to issue its own bulletin and was willing to promise not to exercise that right for a period. It does not make that demand now because the SWP has gone on record in favor of unity and the WP is therefore willing to abide by the decisions of the Extraordinary Party Convention.

In order to achieve unity and to retain it afterward they are willing to run the risk of temporarily (they hope) giving up those freedoms which they consider precious in the internal life of a revolutionary party. But this does not mean that

they expect to be asked that they should remain silent, even among themselves.

If the majority of a party does not want to discuss, a minority would be foolish to force them to discuss. No one can be compelled to discuss. But a minority that wants to discuss problems should not and cannot be prevented from doing so.

In practice that means that the majority must provide the minority with a medium for discussion. Specifically it means that the majority of the united party must publish an internal bulletin where all articles written by minorityites and rejected for publication in the open press can be published. The majority members are not obligated to read those articles and there is no obligation on the part of any branch to discuss any questions. But all those who want to read and discuss must be afforded an opportunity to do so.

We do not expect any controversy whatever before the Extraordinary Party Convention on this question. We confidently expect that the convention will give us much more than that.

To the question: will unity work?, the answer is: It will surely work if the minority has decided to abide by the decisions of the majority, hoping through persuasion to win the majority. It will surely work if the majority will bend backward to provide the minority with all the opportunities to discuss all questions, at least among themselves. We can say for the minority that it has decided to abide by the discipline of the majority. We expect the Extraordinary Party Convention to guarantee the minimum which will make the minority feel free to discuss the important problems confronting the movement.

ALBERT GOLDMAN.

How *Partisan Review* Goes to War

Stalinophobia on the Cultural Front

In its summer 1946 issue, *Partisan Review* printed an editorial attacking the Stalinist "Fifth Column" in American intellectual life: the *New Republic*, *The Nation* and *PM*. Marking a demonstrative return to contemporary political concerns by a magazine which in recent years showed slight visible interest in them, this editorial serves as a central point from which to discuss the attitude of radical intellectuals to political problems.

Though intended primarily as an exposé of the corrosion of the liberal press by Stalinism, the editorial casually and by the blandest references adopts a position toward the current political scene which can only render impossible an effective struggle against Stalinism—not to mention making hopeless any sort of positive socialist aim. *Partisan Review* has succumbed to *Stalinophobia*, a disease common among intellectuals who were once radicals; its major symptom is that regular tired feeling. *Stalinophobia* takes the form of bitter and quite justified denunciations of Stalinism, without any corresponding effort to develop a sociological understanding of it. Hatred for Stalinism becomes an emotional bloc to its political analysis. (The pages of *The New Leader*—from whose basic position the editors of *PR* cannot distinguish themselves, even if they would wish to—are cluttered with such vulgar articles which do not even attempt to understand Stalinism and which always lead to support of one or another reactionary imperialism solely because of its conjunctural opposition to Russia.) The

victims of *Stalinophobia*—which disease the editors of *PR*, in their November-December 1946 issue, coyly try to equate with mere concern at the expanded power of Stalinism—succumb to the same inadequate and often hysterical method of thinking which characterized most American liberals at the time of Hitler's power. As witness:

PR declares that "as long as American policy is weak and halting, the peoples of Europe... will gravitate helplessly... into the Russian orbit." (My emphasis—I. H.) The italicized phrase is central. By its use, *PR* rejects the method of analysis which characterizes the basic aspects of American foreign policy in class terms and substitutes instead the typical liberal (as opposed to socialist) approach of "test your strength." *PR* wants a strong foreign policy in relation to Russia and objects to the present "weak" and "*Caspar Milquetoast*" policy of the State Department. It accepts the State Department's own declarations at face value without understanding that the "soft" policy is a necessary stage in consolidating public support at home and abroad as a prelude to a "get tough" policy at the proper time. These complaints of *PR* about U. S. foreign policy *vis-a-vis* Stalin are in no essential way different from the complaints which filled the pages of *The Nation*, *The New Republic* and *PM* (the "fifth column" press...) about U. S. foreign policy *vis-a-vis* Hitler.

The phrase quoted is not an isolated expression but typical of a political approach. *PR* urges, similarly, a policy of

"trying to needle this timidly conservative (State) Department into a more aggressive (foreign) policy..." Here again the same idea—even the same stale cliché—of *PM*, *The New Republic* and *The Nation* during the period when they supported the Stalinist collective security policy as a means of defeating Hitlerism... or, to be more accurate, of hastening the already inevitable imperialist war between the Allied bloc and Germany. That the editorial writer of *PR* recognizes, if only in some uncharted area of his subconscious, this identity of spirit and approach with the very Stalinoid magazines he is now castigating, is evident from his statement that "*Hitler might have been permanently checked had he been firmly opposed at his very first steps toward aggression.*"

The logic of this position, incidentally, has always been rather difficult to follow. It asserts that if the Anglo-American bloc had been "needled" into threatening war with Hitler, war would have been avoided. Unless its proponents wish to suggest the preposterous idea that Hitler could have been "peaceably contained," their proposal merely meant a war... to prevent war; from which conclusion the Stalinists did not shy away.

One word of commendation, however, is due the editors of *PR*: though only in a passing phrase, they did not hesitate to face the consequences of their position—at least in the Summer '46 editorial. They write: "*But granted (which we do not believe) that... any consistent criticism of Russia will necessarily lead to war; will appeasement, then, do any bet-*

ter? If war is inevitable, does it not become a man's duty to cry stinking fish and face up to the inevitable?" Of course, of course. And by "stinking fish" it is clear that support of U. S. imperialism is meant. An apt image.

PR's Critics

Apparently stung by the numerous criticisms which their editorial evoked, the editors of PR return to the same subject in their November-December 1946 issue. They print several letters, the main one by Heinz Eulau of *The New Republic*, and then launch sharp polemical arrows against 1) the Trotskyists; 2) Dwight Macdonald, and 3) the liberals. PR's sole, though considerable, advantage over the *Nation-New Republic* liberals is its anti-Stalinism; though, as we have tried to point out in this article, its present political methodology is in no essential respect different from that of the liberals. Macdonald* defends himself in the November 1946 issue of his *Politics*. So we shall content ourselves with a few words here on the attack on Trotskyism, as well as the further elaboration of its own position, contained in the PR editorial. The attack on the Trotskyist position on war is made in three major points:

1) By a "verbal sleight of hand" the Trotskyists "surreptitiously place democratic capitalism and Stalinist totalitarianism on the same plane, as if the evils of the two systems were really comparable . . ." and then they denounce those who support U. S. imperialism in the

*The exchange between PR and Macdonald, though incidental to our purpose, has a few precious aspects. Relations are bad between these political *Heldenkämpfer* but they do have a few good words to say for each other. PR finds that Macdonald "as against the Trotskyists, at least has two points of contact with reality in holding: 1) that the masses are not revolutionary in the sense that they can be counted upon at present to rise up of themselves (sic!) and overthrow both capitalist and totalitarian oppressors; and 2) that Stalinist Russia is a new class society with a peculiar dynamism of its own which makes it an expanding threat to the whole world." As for the first of these "points of contact with reality" we cheerfully grant PR and Macdonald their common position and readily acknowledge our faith in the possibility of proletarian socialist revolution, though not of course by a rising "of themselves," whatever that may mean. On the second point, the editors of PR are either ignorant or most forgetful, for they must know that at least one section of the Trotskyist movement—that associated with this magazine—not only believes but was instrumental in expounding in this country the idea that "Stalinist Russia is a new class society with a peculiar dynamism of its own."

Macdonald, for his part, finds PR's polemic against the Trotskyists "masterly, as far as it went, since it repeated what I myself have said often. . . ."

To this mutual accolade comment would be supererogatory.

Second or Third World Wars as adherents to the theory of "the lesser evil." Now there is here a bit of "verbal sleight of hand" but not by the Trotskyists. Just what does PR mean by its accusation that we place democratic capitalism and Stalinism "on the same plane"? One is surprised to find such a vague spatial image in a magazine which, in non-political matters, is so concerned with verbal precision. For several meanings are possible: a) democratic capitalism and Stalinism are the same kind of social system, which we of the Workers Party deny; b) democratic capitalism and Stalinism are both manifestations of an international social disintegration which if continued will lead humanity to barbarism of one kind or another, which we affirm; and c) there is no difference between the kind of political rule (civil liberties, etc.) existing in the U. S. and Russia, which neither we nor any one else with faintly perceptive eyes affirms.

If it is c) which PR means, as seems likely, then its point is a total and obvious *non sequitur*. For one can clearly admit the differences in political rule between the U. S. and Russia, without necessarily supporting the former in a war against the latter. The mere fact that one country is a capitalist democracy and the other a bureaucratic dictatorship is no necessary reason in and of itself, as PR assumes, to support the former in a war; for there may be, and in fact are, other and more fundamental considerations, and the differences in political superstructures may not be, and in fact are not, the issues at stake in such a war.

We reject, however, PR's contention that no comparison is possible between democratic capitalism and Stalinism and that there is between them "the incommensurability of life and death" (demonstrated perhaps during the recent war?). Though they are different social systems, they are both *reactionary* social systems and a choice between reactionary systems would be necessary *only if one abandoned the socialist perspective*.

We affirm rather that support of either democratic capitalism or Stalinism in a war means support to the social forces leading humanity to the abyss of barbarism. Or does PR wish to contend that only Stalinism, and no longer capitalism, is the vehicle of international social decay?

2) PR no longer believes that "the masses are at present capable of overthrowing both capitalism and Stalinism," which leads it therefore, logically

enough, to support U. S. imperialism in its "resistance to Stalinism." (You must admit that "resistance to Stalinism" is a delicate way of putting it.) Here again we discover lamentable verbal imprecision on the part of PR. If by the above-quoted statement, it merely means that the masses have not yet overthrown democratic capitalism and Stalinism or are not doing so at this moment, they have scored an irrefutable but not very useful point. For what is at stake is this question: is there a possibility, sufficiently reasonable to warrant socialists acting on it, of stimulating the masses to such revolutions? The reasons which lead us to answer this question affirmatively we shall not detail here; they have been discussed in this magazine many times, as well as in my article against Dwight Macdonald in the October issue of *Politics*, who also no longer believes in the possibility of proletarian socialist revolution. But we have come a long way from the question of attitude to war; we have come to the central question of socialism itself. That this statement is no exaggeration can be seen when considering the next point.

3) PR writes: "And even if . . . the old order could not be completely destroyed, there still remains one of the basic questions of our period: what reason is there to believe that the new society will not repeat the pattern of Stalinism by creating a new ruling elite and a new form of oppression? Not only have the Trotskyists failed to present a single scrap of evidence—or theory—to show that the masses are able to accomplish their own revolution and retain control of it, but they do not seem to be interested in the question."

The last clause quoted is simply incredible: the pages of this magazine have contained dozens of articles which in one way or another, ably or poorly have discussed this question. PR may not find our answers satisfactory, but to suggest that we are not interested in the matter is to show very bad taste in conducting a polemic.

However, a much more fundamental question is here raised: what does PR itself believe? For our part, we continue to maintain "that the masses are able to accomplish their own revolution and retain control of it"—but perhaps that is merely Marxist obtuseness? Very well then. If PR believes that such a possibility does not exist, then it has the responsibility to demonstrate that contention to the socialist movement in general, which has labored along now under that

belief for a good many years. And what then happens to *PR*'s socialist protestations? For if the masses cannot make "their own revolution and retain control of it" then socialism is *prima facie* impossible.

PR owes its readers a blunt statement on this matter. Either it believes that "the masses are able to accomplish their own revolution and retain control of it"—in which case their polemic against the Trotskyists is, to be charitable, irrelevant; or it does not so believe—in which case it must cease to speak, as it attempts to do in its editorials, as part of the socialist tradition. Anything less is intellectual irresponsibility.

* * *

I wish to conclude this discussion with a few notes on *PR*'s November-December 1946 statement, where it attempts to wriggle out of some of the more embarrassing formulations of its first statement.

In response to the question "*whether we will support America in a war with Russia*," *PR* writes, "*we can only say now that will depend on the existing situation when and if war comes*." Such squeamishness seems strange in people

who only two months before were ready to "*cry stinking fish and face up to the inevitable*." That this half-hearted attempt to squirm out of open commitment to U. S. imperialism comes from embarrassment rather than conviction is shown in the very next sentence where *PR* urges "*that we propose to support the American policy of resistance to Stalinism so long as this policy meets the test of genuinely liberal and democratic standards...*"

Though we know that Philip Rahv and William Phillips edit *PR*, we solicit letters from readers explaining how Freda Kirchway, Max Lerner and Bruce Bliven—1938 versions, to the very phrase—happen to write their editorials.

Everyone has the right to maintain whatever political position he wishes, provided he thinks through to the end its logical consequences. We suspect *PR* on this score because we fail to note one little phrase in its editorials—*atom bomb*. But since *PR* is preparing to support the U. S. in a war with Russia, it must also be aware that that would be an atomic war. What then are the possibilities of the retention after such a war of the democratic human and cultural values in the name of which *PR*

prepares to "*cry stinking fish and face up to the inevitable*?"

PR must consider the consequences of its course. What attitude does it have toward current American military preparations? Are they not essential if "we" are to have a firm foreign policy toward Russia? For whatever Stalin's attitude toward editorials, it is known that he respects armored divisions.

What is *PR*'s attitude, again, toward the proposals for conscription? And toward proposals to cease manufacture of the atom bomb? And what about strikes which weaken U. S. imperialism *vis-a-vis* Russia? If *PR* comes to the conclusion that Stalin, like Hitler, will not be impressed by powerful editorials and ferocious speeches, is it prepared to urge American imperialism to drop a few atom bombs on Russia, before Stalin gets the bomb too?

These questions are neither wisecrashes nor tricky. They point to the inescapable consequences of *PR*'s political position and it is incumbent upon its editors, who are so insistent upon intellectual responsibility in other fields, to speak frankly and openly on this, a central question of our times.

IRVING HOWE.

Discussion of A First Novel

Comments on Rosenfeld's "Passage From Home"

In an earlier article in these pages, "A Comment on Literature and Morality" (May, 1946), I discussed morality as it was treated from the standpoint of personal experience, and reflected in some types of literature. I selected as an example of a current tendency, Lionel Trilling's short story, *The Other Margaret* (*Partisan Review*, Fall, 1945), and after an analysis I concluded such a story shows us "the high road that leads to the realms of the most cultivated banality." Isaac Rosenfeld's first novel, *Passage From Home*, provides an example that permits me to carry my earlier analysis a few steps forward.

In "A Comment on Literature and Morality" I remarked on how moral questions were being discussed in so many fields at the present time, a time in which the entire world system has fallen into a moral abyss. The alarming signs of moral bankruptcy in the present period are constantly being revealed, directly or indirectly, in current writ-

ing. American writers have, in increasing numbers, lost all sense of any perspective, any guiding aim. There is a loss of vigor, a loss of breadth, a loss of depth and curiosity among writers. At the same time, there have been constant, though unclear, attacks on what is loosely called realism or naturalism. Most of these attacks have been over-generalized and abusive. Others have served as a means of projection of some state of dissatisfaction on the part of critics who have not made a sufficient effort to understand the causes for their real dissatisfaction (a) in themselves and in their own views, and (b) more generally by seeking rigorously to establish warranted co-relations between the condition of literature at the present time and the state of present-day society out of which this literature comes. This dissatisfaction further takes the form of a retreat into the self. This retreat into the self is variously expressed, but one form of it is found in the conception of the artistic

self as cultivated, as complex, as especially perceptive. In analyzing Lionel Trilling's story, *The Other Margaret*, I noted that the major character was presented merely as the moral spectator, and that this moral spectator regards moral questions in a way much similar to that in which he regards esthetic objects. The moral problem posed in the story does not call on him to act, to make a decision. His moral sense seems to deepen his wisdom, and in this way induces a mood of contemplation. And for this moral spectator, morals and manners are involved and bound together in such a way that they tend to become a kind of personal stylization.

The Critics of Naturalism

It is noticeable that various of our urban intellectuals, who in a greater or lesser degree, reflect this tendency in their writing, are among the persons more or less dissatisfied with what is so loosely called naturalism. Too much

realism is not fashionable. Now realism and naturalism in literature cannot be seen as one monolithic tendency, and a discussion of it is better to be reserved for another time when it can be dealt with more fully than can be done here. Hence, I merely wish to suggest that in the nineteenth century, and in America in the earlier part of the twentieth century, those writers who were called realistic or naturalistic, were often vigorous, productive, curious and broad in their sympathies and their interests. In many cases one found a tremendous love of life itself in the works of many realistic writers. Tolstoy was, perhaps, the master realist of the nineteenth century, and his great novels contain what almost amounts to an intoxication with life. Zola, who is sometimes mistakenly considered as the father of so-called naturalism, possessed a zest for life, a breadth of interest, a probing curiosity.

Some critics deal superficially with this phenomenon by stressing the point that realists have sometimes wanted mere experience for its own sake, and have not been discriminating, nor have they evaluated with discernment. A sense of intoxication with life, a curiosity motivated by an interest in life, an exercise of an active sensibility and an active mind on nature, on society, on characters and events; all this in itself reveals a positive value. In an epoch such as the present one, when there is such admitted intellectual deadness, such complaining, such lack of effort and energy in the literary world, we should be the more able to see the positive value in the mere love for and interest in life which so many earlier novelists expressed. One might, for the sake of argument, grant to critics of Zola, for instance, many of the false criticisms they make and then still say—it is better to have been Zola than it is to be half dead, and to find that experience narrows, that curiosity declines and that one outlives oneself creatively.

It would be unfair to treat Isaac Rosenfeld's novel as a clear-cut example of this general approach: likewise, it would be improper to make this book the sole representative of a tendency. However, this novel can be related to these foregoing remarks; also, it is not the only work of recent times which suggests such a tendency in formation among writers. But, before generalizing about this first novel, let us first see what is in it.

II

Passage From Home is the story of a fourteen-year-old Jewish boy named Bernard who lives on the West Side of Chicago. The time of the story is more or less that of the depression, the early 1930s. It is written in the first person and told in the words of the character himself, but told after the fact, so that in the story one cannot guess the age of the narrator as he tells of a period of growth in his earlier life. The boy lives with his father—whom he does not feel close to—and a step-mother. The father is a small business man who is getting on economically in a small way. Bernard is an unusually precocious boy and he appears in these pages as a lad with a sharp insight into the motivations of adults. The story deals with his relationships to adults.

This novel is, thus, an unusual one about boyhood. The boy here has no significant contacts with those his own age; we do not see him in association with any companions, nor do we meet him at a period when he is shown in love with any girl of his own generation. He seems to read a lot, but his reading matter is referred to as "books" and we don't learn much concretely about his reading. He attends school, but school is only mentioned passingly or else referred to in a few sentences here and there in the thoughts of the character. He does not play with those of his own age. We can assume that he is superior to his own generation, but this must remain an assumption; other than in a passing scene with a cousin, he is never set against his generation. He is set off against adults. This makes the book additionally unusual as a story of boyhood, for the boy is intellectually superior to the adults with whom he comes into contact; he usually has greater insight into their motives and actions than they have themselves. Another striking fact concerning this as a novel of boyhood is that while the boy-hero is so precocious, so strikingly perceptive, he has little temperament and he has a very weak spirit of rebellion. For not only does he often appear superior to adults, but, also, he seems older than they. Thus, he sometimes doesn't seem like a gifted boy of fourteen who wants to act as though he were, let us say, twenty-one or twenty-five: rather, he appears as though he were acting like a man of forty. Also, he is as much the spectator as he is the actor in the events of the story. A considerable part of the book

deals with the affairs of the adults. These are seen through the eyes of the boy and they are presented analytically. Their words, their gestures, their movements, their quarrels are analyzed for hidden motives.

Bernard's Family

Bernard is attracted to the hill-billy character, Willy. The latter had married a member of Bernard's family who died. Willy seems to come and go in the family circle, where he is considered as a cousin. Bernard's father does not like Willy. Temperamentally, they are opposites. The father is not expressive and is even possibly neurotic; Willy is meant to be natural, expressive, outgoing. Also, Bernard is attracted to an aunt, Minna. Because of a family feud, Minna does not see the family. The antagonism of the family to Minna is focused in the father, and there are contradictory stories as to why these two hate each other. One story holds that Minna wanted to marry the father when Bernard's mother died, and that she even kidnapped Bernard as a baby. The counter version holds that the father wanted her to be his mistress. Minna, in her way, lives a free life, just as Willy does. Willy is a Gentile. Minna associates with Gentiles and observes none of the Jewish rituals. Willy has love affairs. So does Minna. Neither is married, it appears in the story, until the end, when it is divulged that Minna has been secretly married to a strange, older man, named Mason. The greater part of the story involves an account of how Bernard tries to live in and through Minna and Willy.

Bernard's father doesn't want the boy to see either Willy or Minna, but he sees them both. Willy lives at the YMCA and Bernard often visits him there. Bernard doesn't like Willy's sloppy habits of dress, his carelessness in speech, his bad manners; he tries by the force of example to correct these lapses of etiquette. He brings Willy and Minna together and, in fact, he engineers a love affair between them. He lives vicariously in them, and he watches them and analyzes their motives in a sophisticated manner. His "passage from home" consists of his leaving to live with Minna: she is at the time living with and supporting Willy. At a birthday party on the father's fortieth birthday, Minna comes to the house; there is a violent scene. When Minna leaves, the party breaks up and Bernard goes with her. He is disillusioned, guilty; Willy is hu-

miliated by Minna; and then Minna is humiliated by Willy.

Behind the observations and analyses of the boy-protagonist, there are the phenomena of guilt and shame; these are related to the Oedipus relationship. Minna and Willy become substitute father and mother images for Bernard, and at one point the boy consciously realizes this. Willy and Minna bust up in a fashion that has a touch of the sordid, and then Bernard's passage from home ends by his return. In the scene with his father that takes place upon his return, he manages to shift his guilty feelings; his father also feels guilty. Bernard perceives that fathers and sons carry a common load of guilt, and that before they were fathers, fathers were sons; also, he now accepts his step-mother as his mother.

Bound up with this theme is the loneliness of the individual in the world, the world which is "life's vast meaningless profusion." There is no way out against this unless one "fought against it; fought against it by never sparing a moment of the true life and the true human beauty..." And concerning the individual in this jungle—"Our lives contain a secret, hidden from us. It is no more than the recognition of our failing: but to find it is all of courage, and to speak of it, the whole of truth." Father and son more or less recognize failure in the final pages. The act of courage here is personal, and is not completely expressed in the talk between Bernard and his father. It is, rather, an act of self-recognition. And the story is, further, one of the boy's efforts at self-recognition, a self-recognition which comes from his observations of adults with whom he is in a relationship, and some of whom he is trying secretly to manipulate. This development toward self-recognition becomes a psychological mystery story. And the mystery ends in Freudian generalities, coated with pseudo-moral conclusions.

III

It is of significance that this novel is written in the first person and in an autobiographical manner. It is written as by the main hero of the story himself, but the story contains more revelation about others than about himself. The motivations of Minna, Willy, the father, the step-mother, for instance, are explored as fully as those of the "I" of the book, although by its very form this "I," Bernard, is excluded from knowing surely whether or not he is correct in his

analyses of these other characters. But neither are the readers. In this instance, the first person form prevents us from having any clear check on the writer himself as he tells his story. Bernard's consciousness controls everything within the framework of the book. When other characters appear, and when they have collisions with one another, these collisions are reflected through Bernard's eyes. In the story, then, Bernard tries to manipulate adults: and the form of the story is, in addition, a form of manipulation. At the same time, the novel is a fairly long one, 280 pages. But it is rather meager in its details. It is analytical, but the analyses are highly generalized. These analyses are sometimes shrewd, and they throw off many interesting observations; but also, they become pretentious. The narrator hero steps out of character, and the superiority which he possesses, by the very form of the novel which presents him as a manipulator, is revealed in even trivial ways. Thus, concerning the break up of the love affair of Willy and Minna, he tells the reader, apparently without realizing how empty and pretentious he sometimes becomes, that "It is impossible to observe the exact moment when the desire to be loved, like love itself, changes into its opposite." Were this a comment on himself, it would be in keeping. But the comment, presented as that of a boy of fourteen about a man and a woman who have had a love affair, strikes one differently. It suggests the pretentiousness of the book. It reveals how the author has used Freudian commonplaces and pseudo-analysis as a substitution for real detail which conveys a sense of reality of life to the reader.

The Heart of the Story

The form of the story is further one which attempts to establish psychological suspense: Rosenfeld has apparently been influenced by James and Proust. The boy's passage from home, that is, his step toward maturity is, in turn, a search for hidden motives. These hidden motives are the secrets of adults. The growth of the boy is charted by his ability to penetrate these motives. This in turn reveals another concealment, the concealed narcissism at the heart of this novel. The narration presents a character who tells his own story, and his own story is really the story of what he saw and discovered about others. And by being able to tell this story and to reveal the hidden motives of others, he remains superior to these others. In this

way, the hero is revealed as a person having specially fine perceptive powers. Although the boy does not use cultural allusion, these faculties are cultivated ones, faculties which have been given a traditional character in the work of great and gifted writers, such as Proust and James.

The concealed cultural narcissism of the story is what links it with other writings, including that of Trilling, as part of what is developing into a contemporary literary tendency. This tendency presents as the hero or chief protagonist, the observer rather than the actor. The quality of the hero to observe is an outstanding trait. At the same time that the hero or protagonist has such faculties of observation, he does not match these with capacities to act or to experience. The experiences of such a hero are narrow in range. But, at the same time, his reflections, his observations and his conclusions are inversely broad and sweeping. In these observations, society sometimes becomes life-life's jungle. Thus, the experiences of this type of hero, and especially when he is cast in the role of the observer or the spectator, are then used as the basis for glittering and pretentious conclusions about life. These conclusions do not carry the hero out into the world to perform his acts of wisdom and courage in public struggles. Rather they deepen his sense of himself, his confidence in his own powers of penetrating observation. Here we have suggested to us, courage and responsibility when there is no real responsibility. Thus we see what is the real significance of this type of writing. It is escapist. And the escape is one into cultural narcissism. Cultural narcissism in this way becomes "responsibility."

IV

This tendency toward moral and cultural narcissism in literature threatens to become the genteel tradition of the 1940s. It is now promising to produce a hot-house literature. This hot-house literature will have, as a hero, the spectator who looks at other people and who has the wisdom, the knowledge and the analytical capacity to dissect their immoralities and to uncover the hidden motives of their actions. Set against the spectator here are the human mannikins whom the same hero can understand, analyze and criticize. Such writing in turn has its esthetic and stylistic traits. The style of such writing is banal on a high level. The form of such writing is

one in which there are relatively few incidents. The incidents that are used are often presented in a reflected form: they are described by someone who saw them, or they are, as in the case of this book, told by an "I." Further, there is here a self-conscious effort to produce an idea in literature. And this only ends in commonplaces expressing a turgid style that some critics call good writing. Above all else, such writing is weak in characters who are real and credible. This is true of Rosenfeld's novel. His

manner of presentation itself almost demands that his characters be mannikins. A formula of cultural narcissism demands mannikin characters. For the spectator is superior to his characters, and he is observing and analyzing them in the manner that we have already noted. These characters are, thus, precluded from coming before our eyes as real human beings with their own dignity and weaknesses. They are dangled on literary strings, turned into verbal puppets. The very form of the story is

one of manipulation: the characters are manipulated: the boy here is, himself, a manipulator. This all should help to reveal to us the process of the new literary snobbery which is to be found in advanced intellectual circles of the present. This is the symptomatic significance of *Passage From Home*. And also, this is the type of writing which is being advanced as an alternative to realistic and objective novels that seek to explore the nature of experience.

JAMES T. FARRELL.

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Resolution on the International Scene

The Editors, after much deliberation, have given over a large part of this issue to the publication of the "Resolution on the International Situation" adopted by the last National Convention of the Workers Party in June 1946. It was originally planned to issue the resolution as a separate brochure in mimeographed form, along with other key documents of the convention. However, paper shortages and the considerable technical work involved have caused successive delays in this project. The continued crisis in international affairs, with its continuous un-

folding of new turns in the situation, makes it imperative that the comprehensive analysis of the Workers Party be given wider circulation than its availability in a party bulletin. A note of urgency is added to this need by the current discussion in the ranks of the Fourth International movement, both here and abroad, of the questions covered in the resolution. The value of the document is not diminished by the year that has intervened since it was written. On the contrary, nothing so adds to its validity as the possibility to publish it a year later without the

need of retractions, "explanations," suggested revisions or proposed modifications in a futile effort to bridge the gap between prognosis and unfolding reality. We commend it to our reading public with full confidence that it will in time be widely accepted as the programmatic summary of six years development of the position of the Workers Party on the key theoretical and international political questions facing revolutionary Marxists in our period of history. As such it is a brilliant example of the analytical power of Marxism when used, not as dogma, but as a scientific method.—The Editors.

THE OUTCOME OF THE WAR

The end of the war brought about the collapse of the Axis powers, Germany, Italy and Japan and the empires they established in the course of the war. This collapse underlined the important fact that this is not the epoch for the establishment and consolidation of new world empires but rather the epoch of disintegration of imperialism. Monopoly capitalism is imperialist capitalism. With the world already divided among a few imperialist powers and, given the fact that the living space of capitalism becomes more and more contracted, imperialism takes on a new or, rather, an added form. Each imperialist power is driven not only to the domination of the old colonial world but also to the domination and even the subjugation of modern and equally imperialist states. It is this new phenomenon which is only the logical development of monopoly capitalism that enormously accentuates the contradictions and instability of imperialism itself. The attempt to dominate the modern and advanced states and people and to reduce them to a level approaching that of the old colonial countries produces a more violent and systematic and politically more advanced form of resistance than was ever shown in the classical colonial countries or by the more backward peoples. This was demonstrated during the Second World War in the new phenomena of popular national revolutionary movements in the most modern countries of Europe, that is, in countries which, prior to their subjugation by Hitlerite im-

perialism, were themselves subjugating and oppressive imperialist powers.

On the basis of our analysis of the war, we predicted that it would be of long duration and that it would be brought to an end by a proletarian revolution before an imperialist military decision was reached. This prediction proved incorrect. It was based primarily upon an arbitrary analogy with the First World War which ended in a series of proletarian revolutions, one of which, the Russian, was successful. It was based, furthermore, upon our failure to bring the views we had developed on the national question in Europe into coincidence with the war itself. Although the war was not, to be sure, a short one, its duration was cut down decisively precisely by "revolution," even though not by the revolution in the traditional form in which it occurred at the end of the First World War. It is clear that a simple duel between Axis imperialism and Allied imperialism would have meant a war of much longer duration. What intervened to cut it short was the almost all-European national revolutionary movement directed against the existing imperialist state power, the Axis. Had Hitlerism succeeded in consolidating its European empire, in establishing imperialist "order" in Europe, the war would in all likelihood still be fought today. The revolutionary movement in Europe, embracing all the popular masses, made such a consolidation and "order" impossible. In the First World War, the national revolutionary element played virtually no role, and, as exemplified by Serbia, was of no social or po-

litical importance. In the Second World War the national revolutionary movements in Europe, from Poland to France and from Norway to Greece played the decisive role. This contrast is of fundamental importance for the elaboration of the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary Marxists.

However, the national revolutionary movements in Europe, the most widespread and comprehensive in the 20th Century, were not transformed into a triumphant proletarian revolution. Capitalism was not overthrown in a single country. This cannot be explained by the "inherent strength" of European capitalism, for it is weaker today than it has ever been. It can be explained only by the exceptional weakness of the proletarian and revolutionary movements in Europe, corroded, demoralized and disoriented by decades of the leadership of the social democracy and Stalinism. The national revolutionary movements possessed a tremendous social strength, in that they embraced all the lower classes, including them to a far greater extent than had even been accomplished by any proletarian revolutionary movement except the Russian Bolsheviks. However, in the absence of an authoritative revolutionary leadership, this social strength proved to be the political weakness of the national revolutionary movements. The social democrats, as agents of bourgeois democracy, in the form of Anglo-American imperialism, and the Stalinists, as agents of Russian imperialism, monopolized the leadership of the revolutionary movements and were a brake upon their political and social

development. The sections of the Fourth International which follow its official leadership, despite the heroism and sacrifice they manifested, proved to be politically sterile in face of this situation. They failed to become the most ardent and consistent champion of national liberation, of the central aim of these revolutionary democratic movements, and wasted their exceptional opportunities by sectarian abstentionism (or by inconsistent participation) and by inexcusable ultimatism.

The war brought about the most terrible devastation in all history. Europe is a shambles for the most part. The old world and, consequently, the whole world, have been driven many steps closer to barbarism, thus spelling out in the horribly graphic ruins the inescapable choice before the peoples of the world: socialism or barbarism. The devastation of Europe and the bankruptcy of the ruling classes did not, however, produce the proletarian revolution. The objective situation is rotten ripe for the socialist revolution and the socialist reconstruction of society in the sense that capitalism can no longer assure any serious measure of stability, order and progress. Any real rise in the development of the productive forces is confined to a feverish development of the forces of destruction, which means a frightful economic and human waste which is accompanied by an equally frightful social and political reaction.

But the decay of capitalism has manifest-

ed itself not only in the rise of fascism but also in the policies of the social democracy and the reformist trade unions, and in Stalinism. Together, for the past twenty-five years, they have helped to batter in the ideological skull of the proletariat and to distort and falsify its consciousness almost completely. It is difficult to grasp the extent to which the independent proletarian movement has been hurled back in Europe. At the end of the First World War proletarian soviets appeared almost everywhere in Europe, and mass communist parties developed almost overnight. At the end of the Second World War soviets appeared only as isolated, ephemeral phenomena; the revolutionary vanguard has not succeeded in breaking out of its isolation.

If the proletariat did not succeed in taking socialist power, it does not follow that the ruling classes have succeeded in restoring the world to stability, order and progress, or that they have overcome any of the basic contradictions of capitalist or Stalinist society. Europe is at present still in a state of chaos; Asia not less so. There has never been such a destruction of the productive forces, on the one hand, and the development of the destructive forces on the other. The only important country which experienced a tremendous development of the productive forces was the United States, the land of the biggest war victor. It was precisely this development, however, that assured the devastation of Europe.

The destruction of the economic machinery of Europe makes it impossible for the ruling classes to fulfill the elementary economic requirements of the masses, namely, work or unemployment relief and a subsistence level of life. The destruction of the world market makes it impossible for the ruling class of the United States to fulfill the requirements of its economic machinery which was at one and the same time vastly expanded but undisturbed by the war. That is the situation today. Moreover, the inability of the principal imperialist victors to work out the peace terms, to divide the spoils of war in a manner satisfactory or at least tolerable to the decisive victors, is equivalent to a failure to establish the political prerequisites for a minimum of economic stability. Whole countries remain unaware of the fate in store for them (Italy, Balkans, Germany, France, Spain, etc.) Economic order is impossible under such circumstances. However, continuation of this chaos is likewise impossible for it would signify the immediate extension of chaos and of barbarism to the rest of the world, including the victors in the war and especially the strongest victor, the United States; for it is impossible to have any substantial measure of order and stability in the important sections of the world if there is chaos in Europe. The creation of some sort of stabilization, however precarious, is dependent *in the next period* and dependent primarily on the development of the main imperialist antagonism.

THE MAIN IMPERIALIST ANTAGONISM IN THE WORLD

Only two real victors emerged from the war: United States and Russia. All talk of a "Big Five" or a "Big Four" or even a "Big Three" is a fraud. Only two powers rule today and all others are dependent upon one or another of them to one degree or another. In any one capitalist country the inexorable trend of monopoly is revealed in the rule by fewer and fewer over more and more. This trend does not halt at national frontiers. On a world scale it is revealed in a similar way, by the reduction of the number of independent nations, even of independent ruling imperialist powers, and by the corresponding increase in the number of dependent or semi-dependent powers, nations and peoples who are ruled over. This trend has been clearly manifested for a quarter of a century. It was manifested heavily during the war. It has reached its peak with the rule of the world by Russia and America. Japan is a conquered vassal; so are Italy and Germany. Holland cannot even think of reconquering her colonies by herself. France is now a tenth rate power with very little more than pretensions to an independent imperialist existence. England, her empire falling apart, her homeland bankrupt, at the mercies of Russia and the United States, her position in Europe shattered, is literally fighting for her life. She cannot hope to play the role of more than a junior partner of the United States which is at once her protector, ally and master. If the United States has not at all times sided with England against Russia, it was primarily for the purpose of emphasizing to the once proud British imperialists that without the aid of the United States, England cannot stand up against a power

as important as Russia. The British empire is not dead, to be sure, but it is in its agony. The main antagonism in the imperialist world today is between the United States and Russia. The stakes of the conflict between these two giant imperialist powers are nothing less than the domination of the entire world. It is this antagonism that will give the basic coloration to the development of world politics in the next period. If the socialist revolution does not intervene, the antagonism cannot fail to break out into a *third* World War. Consequently, this antagonism will have an equally profound influence on the course of the working class movement.

In the struggle between these two imperialist powers, they are revealed as different historically, socially, and in their methods. Russia is a bureaucratic collectivist state; the United States is a capitalist monopolistic state. Russia was economically ravished by the war, not only in war dead but in the devastation of her agriculture and her economic plant; the United States was enormously developed both agriculturally and industrially and even from the standpoint of the increase in its working forces. Russia is a totalitarian state; the United States is a bourgeois democratic, or democratic imperialist state. Russia has a native mass movement at her disposal in every important country of the world, a movement which is automatically synchronized to her every political move. The United States has no such movement at her disposal except in the form of the un dependable social democracy. Russia destroys or seeks to destroy completely the bourgeoisie of the countries she conquers

or dominates; the United States subjects this bourgeoisie or reduces it to an agency or vassal of American imperialism. Russia pillages the machinery of the conquered countries in order to restore her own dilapidated plant, plunders the food in order to supply herself; the United States is compelled to feed the peoples of the countries in her orbit, at least to the extent of preventing starvation and revolution, and to invest capital in the reconstruction of their industry.

The continuation of the antagonism between American and Russian imperialism cannot but lead to war to determine which power shall dominate and exploit and oppress the entire world. However, such a war is a matter of years of preparation, and cannot break out tomorrow except as the result of a combination of unforeseeable accidents. The Stalinist regime, characteristically Bonapartist and imperialist, keeps shouting demagogically about an imminent war threat, first, in order to silence the growing restlessness and discontentment at home; second, in order to enlist the sympathies of the peoples in other countries; and third, in order to justify or screen the typically imperialist atrocities which it is committing. The self-styled Trotskyists who repeat the cry about the war-danger in the Stalinist sense are unwittingly doing the political dirty work of Stalinist imperialism. The war between the two big imperialist powers is inevitable in the end. But for the next period, neither the economic nor political prerequisites for this war exist. They must first be created and developed. An indispensable part of this is the establishment of outposts, the conquests of preliminary positions, the

ideological preparations for another war between "democracy" and "totalitarianism," the jockeying for positions, etc., etc. This is at present and for the next period the stage in which the "war" will develop.

In this preparatory period, the struggle is already on—it started in the very midst of the Second World War itself—for the division of the world into two camps, that of Russian and that of American imperialism. The principal fronts for this struggle are Europe and Asia. In the struggle, some of the differences between the salient traits of the two imperialisms are already revealed.

Stalinist imperialism, totalitarian by its very nature, and urgently in need of raw materials, machinery and labor power, utilizes its advantageous geographical position for annexing, directly or indirectly, all adjacent territories and peoples possible. Its principal instruments are the army, the GPU and the CPs of the annexed lands. By means of its terroristic regime, it creates as rapidly as possible the conditions without which it cannot maintain its imperial rule: crushing and expropriating the bourgeoisie, "giving" land to the peasants under bureaucratic police management, wiping out all traces of the labor and revolutionary movements, as well as all institutions and rights of democracy and reducing all workers to the level of forced labor. There is hardly a measure adopted by the fascists in their struggle for power—and their methods were taken over largely from Stalinism and uniquely developed—that Stalinism does not employ in its own behalf. The stripping of the economic plant of the conquered countries and the drafting of millions of slave laborers for work in Russia are a peculiar requirement of Stalinist Bonapartism.

For a number of economic and political reasons, American imperialism cannot or does not have to proceed in the same way. Stalinist autarchy is far less dependent upon the world market than American capitalism, or rather is dependent upon it in a radically different way. Russia is not a capital-exporting country; the U. S. is. The U. S. does not have the political possibility of maintaining the armed force in peacetime that totalitarian Russia has; moreover, the speed with which the U. S. can create a big armed force, out of practically nothing, does not necessitate its maintenance of the same kind of armed force that Russia must maintain. Finally, to come to grips with Russia requires that America have armed forces, and an economic basis for them, in lands closer to Russia than the United States is itself.

Russia cannot give anything to the conquered territories or the vassal states; given her own poverty, it can only take from them. Hence her control over these states must be of a police character, even more so than was the case with Nazi domination of other lands.

The United States can give something to the conquered countries or to vassal states. Her vast economic power which, for all external suavity, she employs with brutality and blackmailing cynicism, is the basis for her pious pacifism.

To have armies in Europe and—more important—the economic basis for such armies, the U. S. is compelled to engage in the reconstruction of Europe. These armies,

agents of American imperialism at bottom, the ones that are expected to initiate the war against Russia so that America can come in toward the end to snatch the fruits of victory, must be paid for by the only power capable of paying—American imperialism. To get people to fight for it, the U. S. must feed them.

The reconstruction of Europe is mandatory upon American imperialism for another reason. Unless there is some economic stability established, these countries will fall, one after the other, into the orbit of Stalinism. Or what is worse from the standpoint of U. S. imperialism, they will be conquered by the socialist proletariat. Another reason: After the last war, U. S. sought to put Europe on rations in the world market, i.e., on reduced rations. The world market today is utterly shattered. There is starvation everywhere; war debts everywhere; mass unemployment and wandering everywhere. Previously, America had to try to reduce the rations of Europe. Today, capitalist society has decayed to the point where America *has* to try (in the course of restoring the world market to some level) to raise the rations of Europe from the level of "no rations" at all.

The immediate economic requirements of the swollen economic apparatus of America, and the long-term imperialist requirements for the domination of the world—coincide at this point, and manifest themselves in the appearance of America as the provider of food, capital, and "democracy" for Europe and for the reconstruction of Europe. The U. S. has neither the political possibility nor the need FOR THE NEXT STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT of establishing its domination over other lands with the same *outwardly* brutal methods as Nazism or Stalinism. It is still wealthy enough to afford the mask of democracy, even in its dealings with other countries.

This is manifest not only in Europe, but also in Asia. There the U. S. appears as the bold heir of the decaying British and Dutch and French empires. Partly under pressure

of the masses, but also under the pressure of U. S. imperialism, Britain finds itself compelled to offer additional concessions to India. The U. S. holds as firmly as possible to the line of keeping China out of the Russian sphere of influence or domination, with Russia fighting just as aggressively to conquer at least the northern section of China. In Japan, the United States takes all the measures necessary to prevent that country from playing an INDEPENDENT economic, military or imperialist role, but at the same time plays the demagogical game of "democratizing" the country so as (1) to impress all the Asiatic peoples with its political superiority as patron of the continent over totalitarian Russia, (2) so as to enlist the greatest amount of popular support for itself in Japan for the eventual war with Russia, and (3) by depriving Japan of war-making power, to take over the war-making functions for itself in a future eventuality, and thus have an almost continental base for attack upon Russia.

All the post-war institutions initiated by the U. S. come under this heading: UNRRA, World Bank, UNO, etc., etc.

Naturally, the export of "democracy" to Europe and Asia must be paid for by the other countries, if not in cash then in subtle and more insidious and sinister forms. England is being forced gradually into the position of vassal of America, and the British press is not far wrong in complaining that the relationships existing between the two lands in the 18th century are now being reversed. France, for all her attempts to establish a Western Bloc which she can dominate as a springboard for the restoration of her European imperialist glory, must come crawling to Washington for food, money, and even for permission to exploit her "just share" of the war booty, Western German coal. The price of American support for the reconstruction of Europe is not the abandonment of democracy by the European countries. The U. S. is careful not to make demands which would lead to further chaos, to civil war, for even if the proletariat of the European countries (especially the Western European countries) is not ready for the socialist revolution, it has given clear enough proof that it will fight bitterly against any attempt to establish a regime in any way similar to that of the Nazis against which they fought with such revolutionary courage. But the U. S. does make demands which mean increased restrictions upon democracy. It preferred Darlan to de Gaulle; it prefers de Gaulle to Blum-Herriot or Blum-Thorez. Above all, it prefers the Catholic Church to the social democracy or the petty bourgeois liberals. In the first place, the church is much more reliable politically than the social democracy, so far as unwavering support of capitalism is concerned. In the second place, it is more reliable than the social democracy so far as mass support, which the U. S. seeks, is concerned. In the fourth place, the church has mass support in countries—particularly in eastern and southeastern countries—where the social democracy has none. Hence, the mutually improved relations between Washington and the Vatican.

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AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

Historically, the basis for the existence of the modern social democracy (as distinguished from the revolutionary social democracy of the 19th century) is provided by the organic upswing of capitalist economy, the amassing of super-profits from colonial exploitation, and the consequent development of a labor aristocracy and an equally conservative labor bureaucracy.

With the decay of capitalism, especially in Europe, with the decay of European imperialist powers, with the disappearance, apparently of the historic economic basis of the social democracy, some Marxists drew the arbitrary conclusion during the war that the social democracy had disappeared. This conclusion, attesting an ignorance both of theory and politics, has been sufficiently refuted by the first post-war period. The European social democracy has had a significant rebirth, as witness England, Italy, France, Holland, Belgium and even Germany. The social democracy, it is true, has degenerated further politically and socially. Its ranks as well as its leadership are increasingly petty bourgeoisie. But in all countries it is still a petty bourgeois workers' party, and in some countries it still retains the allegiance of the bulk of the working class. The idea that because the economic basis of the social democracy in Europe has "disappeared," it too has disappeared, has been proved to be preposterous. The corollary idea that the basis for bourgeois democracy has disappeared in Europe and that therefore there could be no "democratic interlude" between the fall of fascism and the establishment of the proletarian socialist power, has been proved to be equally preposterous, and, so far as the tactics of the revolutionary Marxists are concerned, downright pernicious and disorienting.

As analyzed by the National Resolution of the WP, the fall of fascism in Europe would in all likelihood be followed by a period of bourgeois democracy. The analysis pointed out that this democracy could not be expected to enjoy the same period of long and organic growth that it knew in the period before the First World War, or even the period between the two world wars; that it would not be even as democratic as it was in those two periods; that it would be heavily overlaid with authoritarian, Bonapartist and dictatorial features of all kinds. But it would be a period that would be so radically different from that prevalent under fascism as to be unmistakably qualifiable as bourgeois democracy—Bonapartist, distorted, degenerated, restricted, etc., that is, the only kind of bourgeois democracy collapsing European capitalism is capable of yielding.

The sources of this democratic interlude are as follows:

The masses, strangled for years under the most rigid totalitarianism, want, in general, "freedom"—the right to speak, to write, to meet, to organize, to strike, to vote, to be democratically represented in a sovereign legislature, etc. The bourgeoisie, hopelessly compromised and extraordinarily weak, is unable at one blow to suppress the popular movement and the democracy for which it fought under Nazism. The masses resist, in one degree or another, moving directly from one dictatorship to "another"

even if the "other" is the opposite of the Nazi dictatorship, namely, the socialist dictatorship of the proletariat. This is especially the case when in the eyes of the masses—many of them—the latter is associated with everything that is represented by Stalinist totalitarianism.

The masses want an opportunity to examine all political programs, which they did not have under the Nazis; they want to see the unfolding in practice of all political programs.

The masses are vastly fatigued. They can summon up strength for new assaults but only with difficulty and under exceptional circumstances. The war and the struggle against the Nazis was a terrible bloodletting for the peoples. They aim, therefore, to have representative institutions of "their own" which they were deprived of by fascism, their traditional organizations (unions and parties) and the parliament. This is understood by everybody in Europe (except the leadership of the Fourth International). Even the Stalinists are compelled to present themselves, at least in words, as the champions of representative parliaments, constituent assemblies, etc., etc.

The masses want a parliament of "their own," one that will regulate the reconstruction of the nation, its economy, in such a way that there will be work for all and food for all. They are not interested in the least in preserving private property or the rule of the bourgeoisie, so badly compromised either by being fascist in the Axis countries or by being fascists or collaborators in the conquered countries. Hence, their support of nationalization.

The struggle for the masses therefore revolves around so-called "constitutional" or parliamentary questions. In these conditions, the social democracy could not only survive but even flourish.

The social democracy can flourish for another reason. The popular enthusiasm for the Stalinist parties, due to their skill in participating in the popular national revolutionary movements and to the glory reflected upon them by the spectacular successes of the Russian regime and its armies, as well as to the general and vague feeling among the masses that supporting the Communist Parties meant supporting the idea of a revolution in their own country like that of the Russians in 1917—this enthusiasm is now waning. It is waning because of the repelling maneuvers of the CPs since the "heroic period" of the national revolutionary movements, and above all by what the European peoples are seeing with their own eyes about the robber role of Stalinist imperialism, its looting and ravishing of conquered lands, its imposition of national oppression no different in the eyes of the masses than that imposed by the Nazis. This waning of Stalinist popularity is visible in country after country: in the Austrian and Hungarian elections; in the breaking of the "unity" drive launched by the Stalinists in Italy for the purpose of absorbing and wiping out the SP; in the resistance to the same kind of "unity" drive in Germany; in the beginnings of a proletarian shift from the CP to the SP in France; in the virtual halt brought to the growth of the CP in England

(and in the crisis of the CP in the U. S. A.).

The masses, finished with the bourgeois regime, wanting socialism or steps toward socialism (as they understand it), do not quit the CP in order to become politically indifferent or to join the outright bourgeois parties . . . individuals do, not the masses. Instead, they rally once more to the social democracy.

Finally, there is another reason, the essentials of which were laid bare by Trotsky two decades ago. Left to itself, to its own resources, there is hardly a country in Europe that can reconstruct its economy and, by virtue of that fact, make possible the preservation of bourgeois democracy to any extent. European economy and the European bourgeoisie are utterly bankrupt on a continental basis. The social democracy does not think in terms of socialism except as a remote and at present unrealizable ideal; it does not think in terms of socialist power or the socialist reorganization of economy. Its own bourgeoisie—in Europe—cannot, however, provide it with the basis for its own existence, which is another way of saying with the basis for the existence of bourgeois democracy and a relatively free labor movement. However, there is a bourgeoisie left that can provide that basis, even if narrowed down and even if obtained on very high terms. That is the American bourgeoisie. It is upon this bourgeoisie that it relies more and more for salvation, at least "for the present." It looks to it not only for food for the people and capital for reconstruction—but also as its guardian from the encroachments of Stalinism. It has no political and social program based upon the independent class interests and class action of the proletariat—the only way in which not only Stalinism but bourgeois chaos and barbarism can be defeated. It has no confidence in the social ability of the working class to reorganize society. It has lost its confidence in its own bourgeoisie. It can no longer rest upon the economic foundations once provided by its own capitalism—that is gone. It therefore seeks the substitute for these foundations which wealthy and powerful American imperialism can provide.

In one way or another, the social democracy (i.e., the leadership of what remains of the Second International in Europe), presents this conception of its role and perspective to the working class that follows it. To the extent that it corresponds to the truth, to the bitter reality, the masses accept this conception, even if reluctantly and without enthusiasm. The almost boundless illusions about American or Anglo-American imperialism—the "liberators of Europe"—which were entertained by the European masses during and immediately after the war, have since diminished and been dissipated. But many of the illusions remain. As is so often the case with the democratic illusions of the masses, in this case too they are based on a "kernel of truth," namely, the idea that for its own good imperialist reasons, if for no other, the United States will find itself obliged to give some food to Europe, some capital for European reconstruction. The social democracy, by embellishing the "kernel of truth," by its eulogies of "American

democracy," by presenting American imperialism as a beneficent friend, horribly distorts the "kernel of truth," spreads and deepens the illusions of the people, and conceals from them the big and important truth that the generosity of Uncle Sam is a step, necessary for him, in the process of preparing Europe for a tighter yoke around its

neck at a later stage; is the peculiarly American-imperialist way of strengthening reaction in Europe and frustrating the aspirations of the masses; is the indispensable prerequisite to the eventual mobilization of at least the western part of the continent for service as advance guard, shock troops, in the Third World War to eliminate the

Russian rival who is the only power standing athwart America's road to global domination—the only power except for the masses themselves.

Meanwhile, the social democracy has become, and is increasingly, the "State Department's socialists" or the "Downing Street socialists."

RUSSIAN IMPERIALISM AND STALINISM

At the very outset of the war, the founders of the Workers Party, in opposing the war as imperialist on both sides, set forth the position that Russia's role in the war was imperialist too, and that in two senses: one, that she was participating as an integral part of the imperialist war, and two, that she was pursuing imperialist aims of her own. Hence, the slogan of "unconditional defense of the Soviet Union" was outlived, had become reactionary, and could only serve the ends of Stalinist imperialism. If this question could be seriously debated among Marxists in 1939-1940, it is no longer possible to do so today. The position of our party has been confirmed to the very hilt. The proponents of support of Russia in the war, prompted though they were by revolutionary proletarian considerations, nevertheless capitulated objectively to Stalinist imperialism and helped to cover its deception and enslavement of other nations and peoples with radical arguments.

Stalinist Russia today is a full-grown imperialist power. The sway of the reactionary ruling class in Russia extends over a dozen other lands and over tens of millions of other peoples. These peoples have been deprived of their elementary democratic right to national independence and self-government and reduced to the slavery imposed by bureaucratic-collectivism. Along with this right have disappeared all their other rights, for the first victim of the victory of Stalinism is the working class, its democratic organizations and rights (more accurately, the very first victim of Stalinism is the revolutionary vanguard of the working class). Revolutionary socialism does not recognize the right of any nation or people or class to deprive any other nation, people or class of these elementary rights except in the higher interests of democracy (as in the period of the great bourgeois revolutions) or in the higher interests of socialism (as in the period of the proletarian revolutions). In the case of bureaucratic-collectivist Russia, the peoples of the Baltic and the Balkans, of Rumania and Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, of Poland and East Prussia, of sections of Asia and the Middle East, have been thus disfranchised in the interests of Stalinist slavery and of the consolidation of the Stalinist bureaucracy. They have been enslaved as loot and booty of the struggle for the imperialist domination of the world. The revolutionist loses title to his name who does not protest and fight against this enslavement.

The claim that this "expansion" (i.e., imperialist aggression and annexation) is required "merely" for the "security" of Russia is a classical imperialist sophism. The defense of the frontiers of a nation (whether by purely defensive measures or by offensive measures is actually of no importance) is warranted only if it is fighting to

acquire or maintain or extend democracy or socialism. "Security" by annexation to a nation which is itself ruled by a reactionary class which tramples democracy and socialism under foot more ruthlessly than anywhere else in the world, and enslaves every other people over whom it extends its dominion, is nothing but a euphemism and justification of imperialist oppression and exploitation. Every nation has the right to be ruled by its own people, even if they choose a reactionary regime, without unwarranted interference by another nation. On the other hand, every nation has the right to come to the aid of another people which is fighting to overturn its own tyrannical regime, provided this assistance is not aimed at replacing the old tyranny with another and thereby strengthening reaction as a whole. This basic socialist principle, observed by the revolutionary workers' state of Lenin and Trotsky, and proclaimed by it, is applicable in judging the policy not only of the imperialism of capitalist states, but as well to the imperialism of the Stalinist state.

The social sources of Stalinist imperialism have already been examined scientifically by the revolutionary Marxists. It is necessary to continue this examination with the greatest scientific objectivity, without prejudices, and through to the very end. It is not necessary, however, to wait until the last word has been uttered on this question in the scientific sphere before arriving at a judgment of Stalinist imperialism as it has already, and sufficiently, manifested itself, or before adopting a political position toward it.

If bureaucratic collectivism survives in Russia until the next war, the Stalinist state will enter the war on the same basis as its principal rival: for the purpose of defending its imperialist conquests and its reactionary rule at home, for the purpose of extending these imperialist conquests and this rule, for the purpose of winning the struggle for the domination of the globe. Whatever the abstract or historically remote possibilities may be, all the present indications, the whole present trend, show that the Third World War, if it is allowed to come, will be a struggle between the two monster imperialisms for world mastery, and consequently, a struggle that would decide the fate of the world for an indefinite period of time. Under such circumstances, it is impossible for the revolutionary Marxists to speak in any way of "defense of the Soviet Union." The resolution on the Russian question adopted by our party in 1941 deliberately "left the door open" with regard to the possibility of again raising the slogan of defense of Russia (not in the Second World War but in a conceivable later war). The party took the view that in examining a new social phenomenon that was still in the early process of formation, namely, bureau-

cratic collectivism, and without positive foreknowledge of the political face of the world in the post-war period, it did not have the right as a scientific Marxian organization to set forth its position categorically on all aspects of the question of Stalinism and for all time. Indeed, even now, the party does not lay claim to a position which applies forever and under all conceivable circumstances. But "all conceivable circumstances" is an abstraction which has its "rights" on the plane of abstraction. What is before us concretely is the development of Stalinist Russia as a full-fledged reactionary empire, oppressing and exploiting not only the Russian people, but a dozen other peoples and nations—and that in the most cruel and barbarous way. What is before us concretely is the overwhelming probability of the next world war being fought between two reactionary imperialist powers for the preservation and extension of their empires. In face of this reality, the Workers Party declares flatly that all talk of defense of Russian imperialism (or of American imperialism) in that war, or in the period of preparation for that war which we are now living through, is reactionary talk and signifies an abandonment of the principles and interests of the proletariat and of socialism.

The concretization of our party's position on the slogan of "defense of the Soviet Union" must be accompanied by an important correction in its resolution on Russia. The resolution, which has otherwise been confirmed so emphatically, contains an error. It declares that in the absence of a proletarian revolution, Stalinist Russia, after the war, "cannot, in all likelihood, escape integration into the capitalist system as a colony or a series of colonies of imperialism." It adds that the stages of development that will be passed "before bureaucratic collectivism in Russia is destroyed either by the proletarian revolution or capitalist counter-revolution, cannot be established categorically in advance." The end of the war has shown, however, that although capitalism has not been destroyed by the proletariat, bureaucratic collectivism in Russia has not only *not* been integrated into the capitalist system, has not only *not* been overturned, but has survived and expanded. This provisional forecast of the party's resolution was in error exactly to the extent to which it represented a hangover of the theory rejected by the party, namely, the theory that Russia is a "degenerated workers' state" which could not survive the war. Fortunately, this error was not seriously reflected in the current analyses of the party during the war, nor did it affect the political line of the party—its struggles against the war, against Stalinism, and Stalinist imperialism, for socialism, or its struggle on the theoretical and political planes against the theoreticians of the "workers' state."

THE NATURE OF THE STALINIST PARTIES

Stalinist imperialism is unique in that, among other things, it has at its disposal a "native" mass movement in all other countries, the "Communist parties" and their affiliates. If one major section of the labor movement—the social democracy—is more and more an agency of American imperialist democracy, the other major section—the Communist parties—is outrightly the agency of Stalinist imperialism. The theory that the Stalinist parties (like the traditional reformist organizations) are agents of the capitalist class, that they "capitulate to the bourgeoisie," is fundamentally false. They are the agencies of Russian bureaucratic collectivism. To the extent that they serve the bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries, it is *only* as agents of the Kremlin who are temporarily hired out for service to the bourgeoisie of this or that country but only in the given interests of the Stalinist state, of its diplomatic maneuvers, of its imperialist objectives. The old Communist parties in the days of the opportunist leadership of the Comintern did tend to conciliate the bourgeoisie and to capitulate to it under stress. The present Stalinist movement has nothing but the name in common with these old parties. It serves, today, a strong imperialist master. In the interests of this master, it is capable of the most irreconcilable opposition to its "own" capitalist class and to its rule. It is imperative to understand this, for otherwise the whole struggle against Stalinism is falsified or nullified. If this is not understood, Stalinism stands to gain by being subjected only to attacks which are aimed at what Stalinism is *not*, instead of attacks aimed at what it is and at those points where it is really vulnerable. Stalinism is not, however, merely the servant of Russian imperialism. If this were the only role it played, the tenacity and "durability" of the Stalinist bureaucracy in the capitalist countries could not be adequately explained. This bureaucracy is not prompted exclusively or even primarily by such "idealistic" considerations as the preservation and consolidation of the Russian state bureaucracy. It has a material base of its own and its own social ambitions in every country. The Stalinist parties are fundamentally different from all the traditional working class parties, not only from those that are revolutionary socialist in character but also from those that are reformist, centrist or anarchist. The Stalinist parties are the parties of bureaucratic collectivism. As Trotsky set it forth in his ultimate judgment of the Stalinist bureaucracy, it seeks to establish in every capitalist country in which it functions the same social and political regime as prevails in Russia today.

The material basis of the Stalinist bureaucracies is provided by the deepening disintegration and decay of capitalism. The social democrat, the reformist, the old trade union bureaucracy rose and developed on the basis of the upswing of capitalist economy. In that period, a pro-capitalist labor bureaucracy was created. This reformist sector of the labor movement became tied to capitalist democracy. It was nurtured economically by the concessions which capitalism could still afford to give, and it received a satisfying political status from the prosperous bour-

geoisie and its democracy. However, as capitalism decays and is wracked by agonizing crises, it can less and less afford economic or political concessions to the working class in general or to the reformist bureaucracy in particular. The material basis of reformism is narrowed both in the economic and the political spheres. Reformism does not break its ties with capitalist democracy; but decaying capitalism breaks its ties with reformism.

As capitalism decays and narrows the basis for existence of reformism, the bonds linking whole strata of the population to the foundations of capitalism—private property—are loosened. To maintain private property, which means nowadays to preserve the increasingly centralized and concentrated power of monopoly capitalism, requires the economic and political disfranchisement, the economic and political degradation not only of the proletariat but also of the middle and intermediate classes and social strata—peasants, small producers and manufacturers, small traders, professionals, civil servants, scientists, labor bureaucracies, industrial managers and supervisors, etc., etc. Fascism appeals to all these strata with a socially-demagogical program of "anti-capitalism" but with the social aim of maintaining precisely that form of capitalist ownership which is disfranchising, degrading and declassing the social strata to which fascism appeals. Stalinism, on the other hand, while appealing to the same strata, with a no less demagogical program of "socialism," nevertheless aims at removing from power that class—the monopoly capitalists—which stands in the way of the acquisition of social power by the Stalinist bureaucracy. In this sense, too, fascism and Stalinism, while not identical, are "symmetrical phenomena." Stalinism has a grip on the minds of the working class not only by virtue of its usurpation of the socialist traditions of the Bolshevik Revolution. It seeks, and often gains, support of the working classes because, while its anti-proletarian and anti-socialist nature is not immediately clear, its anti-capitalist nature is apparent. It cannot be considered an accident that the Stalinist bureaucracy attracts to its ranks, especially in countries where the decay of capitalism has reached an advanced stage, many of the former reformist bureaucrats whom capitalism no longer offers economic or political security. The expropriation of the bourgeoisie by the democratic proletariat means the beginning of the end of all bureaucratism and bureaucratic privilege. But the seizure of all social power by Stalinism means the legal and police sanctification of bureaucratic privilege and power. It is likewise no accident that Stalinism attracts to itself also such elements as the declassed worker, the disoriented and demoralized petty-bourgeois intellectuals and professionals whom capitalism allows an ever narrowing base for existence but whom the triumph of Stalinism offers exceptional privileges and social status.

The growth and triumph of the Stalinist bureaucracy means neither the victory nor the advancement of socialism and the proletariat. It means the establishment of the

totalitarian tyranny known as bureaucratic collectivism. Such a tyranny is possible only in the absence of a socialist perspective. Inasmuch as the socialist perspective depends, in our period, on the ability of the revolutionary Marxists to establish a party able to place itself at the head of the working class and all other little people, the triumph of Stalinism is possible only under the condition of the absence of such a party. Conversely, it is impossible in the presence of such a party, since *all* the other conditions for the victory of the socialist proletariat have matured to the highest degree under capitalism.

The question of the perspective of Stalinism cannot, therefore, be resolved in a purely theoretical way. It can be resolved only in struggle. Every advance of Stalinism is not only a defeat for democracy but also a defeat for the proletariat and for socialism. Unlike reformism, Stalinism does not aim at the preservation of bourgeois democracy, let alone at the conquest of proletarian democracy. Stalinism is neither a democratic nor a socialist movement, but a bureaucratic totalitarian collectivist movement, which must be resisted by the organized proletariat at every turn.

The traditional policy of the revolutionary vanguard toward the labor-reformist movements (or bureaucracies) does not, therefore, apply to the Stalinist movements. Given its inability to lead the proletariat directly and in its own name, the revolutionary vanguard is prepared, as always, to give critical support to the reformist bureaucracies in their conflicts with the capitalist class. This makes possible, at least to some extent, the defense of the economic and political integrity of the working class and its movement, or even the defense of bourgeois democracy against fascism, i.e., the defense of the political conditions that are more favorable to the existence and development of the working class. The same policy cannot be applied to Stalinism, since it is neither a democratic nor a socialist movement and has neither democratic nor socialist aims. The revolutionary Marxists, therefore, maintain the general rule of no support of Stalinism of any kind and of irreconcilable opposition to any move calculated to strengthen its position.

Whether or not Stalinism can triumph in the capitalist world cannot be decided absolutely in advance. To repeat, it is a question of struggle. Up to now, it is established that Stalinism was able to triumph by overturning the rule of the proletariat (Russia). It was able to triumph in the Baltic countries annexed to Russia, but only by virtue of the military force of Russian imperialism. In Poland and Yugoslavia, the Stalinist bureaucracy has taken power. In clear refutation of the analysis that it represents a "capitalist" force, the bureaucracy has not only disfranchised and enslaved the proletariat and peasantry, but has systematically expropriated the bourgeoisie and the landlords and converted their property into state property. This phenomenon gives the final blow to the theory that Russia is a "workers' state" because property is nationalized. But it does not establish the conclusion that Stal-

inist collectivism is guaranteed to replace capitalism in the world. Both in Poland and Yugoslavia, Stalinism came to power under exceptional circumstances, namely, in the absence of any organized bourgeoisie to speak of and by means of the direct and decisive aid of the armed forces of Russian imperialism. Nowhere has Stalinism shown its social ability to crush a free working

class or, more important, its ability to overthrow the rule of the capitalist class. The countries in which it has triumphed are lands where the bourgeoisie was weak to begin with and where feudal remnants were thickly intertwined with capitalist relationships. Nowhere has Stalinism shown its social ability to overturn the rule of the capitalist class in a modern, advanced capitalist

country. Hence, our denial and rejection of the theory of the "Stalinist epoch," our reaffirmation of the theory that Stalinist bureaucratic collectivism represents a mongrel social formation, and our reaffirmation of the concept that this is the epoch of the proletarian socialist revolution which will sweep away capitalism and bureaucratic collectivism alike.

PERSPECTIVES AND TASKS: GERMANY AND EASTERN EUROPE

Nowhere did the pre-war perspectives of the Fourth International stand in sharper contrast to the political reality produced by the war than in Germany. If there was still reason to assign to the German proletariat a pivotal role in the strategy of the European revolution up to Hitler's triumph in 1933, the successful mobilization of the German nation in 1939 without internal disturbances, the paralysis of the German proletariat during the Nazi conquest and subjugation of the Continent, and the absence of any repercussions within Germany to the military set-backs beginning at Stalingrad in the winter of 1942-1943, proved the need to re-examine the analysis that designated Germany the "key to the international situation." A refusal to do the latter was only possible on the part of those who, as with the leadership of the SWP, stubbornly denied that the fascist conquest of Europe had hurled back the proletariat in terms of consciousness and organization. Those who insisted that fascism had taught the proletariat the lessons of revolutionary politics and that, consequently, it would emerge from the fascist oppression at a higher political level than before could not but assign to the German proletariat the vanguard role in the European revolution. The colossal blunder of continuing to view the German proletariat in terms of 1918-1933 was an inseparable part of the totally false position which rejected the slogan of national liberation, which led to abstention from participation in the resistance movements, which foresaw the overthrow of Hitler as the proletarian revolution and which posed as the main slogan "the United Socialist States of Europe." Basing themselves upon this completely unreal analysis, its authors momentarily expected, with amazing credulity and increasing desperation, the outbreak of the proletarian revolution as an automatic result of Germany's growing military catastrophes in 1944-1945. This gross misreading of the situation in Germany revealed that its perpetrators sadly lacked even an understanding of the mechanics of the proletarian revolution and conceived of it in terms of the sheerest automatism and spontaneity.

The defeat in 1933, the twelve-year long rule of Nazi terror, the devastation of six years of war, the conquest and occupation by the victorious powers and the infamous partition of Germany by the four powers for purposes of scientifically bleeding it of its economic potency and political viability as a nation makes it necessary to begin the task of again collecting in class organizations the shattered and dispersed forces of the German proletariat at the most primitive level. Of all the obstacles this task must overcome,

the first and the greatest is the military occupation of Germany. Until this condition is ended, the scene will be dominated by the national struggle for liberation. The main slogan around which the German Marxists must orient the struggle in the coming period is "For a unified and independent Germany!" This struggle begins as a struggle for democratic rights against the military authorities of the occupying powers and their quisling supporters. Freedom of speech, of press, of assembly, of movement, of organization, of communication and the right to vote and the demand for a free national assembly will constitute the issues around which the political struggles will revolve and the masses will rally. Unless the German proletarian organizations take upon themselves the lead in this struggle and conduct it in the spirit of socialism and internationalism, this task will fall to the reactionary nationalists. They will utilize it for the reconstruction of the Nazi movement, regardless of the guise or the name under which it will appear. Neither the Social Democrats nor the Stalinists can give the proletariat a lead in this struggle. The former plays the role of adjutant to the Anglo-American authorities and the latter is the creature of the Russian oppressors. This struggle requires the speediest organization of a revolutionary Marxist party and, in turn, affords our German comrades a clear issue upon which to struggle for such a party.

The Marxists of the "victorious" nations have the special task of defending the democratic rights of the German people, by helping, in the first place, to free the land of the imperialist invaders. The reunification and liberation of Germany remains the first step toward the restoration of the truncated economy of the Continent. In this *historical* sense, Germany remains the key to Europe. The Marxists of Western Europe must link the struggle against American domination of their own countries with the struggle against the oppression of Germany by their own ruling classes. Such an international proletarian struggle in the defense of the German people will be one of the surest barriers to the reappearance of a Nazi movement in Germany. It will restore to the German proletariat the self-confidence and morale which has been its greatest deficiency since 1933. It will pose before the Stalinist-led workers of Western Europe the "German question" as a question of international proletarian solidarity and, thereby, pose before them the "Russian question" from the point of view of imperialist oppression. In this respect the effect of the struggle by the workers of the victorious powers upon the German proletariat is only an aspect of the whole mechanism by which the

revolutionary impetus will be given to the German scene, i.e., via the revolutionary struggles of the international proletariat, above all those of Western Europe.

The conquest of virtually all of Eastern Europe by Stalinist imperialism has, as in the case of Hitler's conquests, burdened the masses with a combination of class exploitation and national oppression. In these countries especially the slogan of the "defense of the Soviet Union" can be nothing but a cover for the rapacity of Stalinist imperialism. The revolutionary Marxists are no less firmly committed to support of the demand for national liberation from the yoke of Stalinism than from the yoke of Hitlerism or any other form of imperialist subjugation and violation of the right of self-determination and self-rule. The Fourth International must adopt and propagate the slogan of national liberation for the peoples and nations oppressed by Stalinist Russia as an elementary internationalist duty and as an indispensable part of the internationalist education of the whole working class. As in the case of the movements which arose against German imperialism, the Workers Party will support every socialist or genuinely popular democratic movement of resistance against the imperialist oppressor in Eastern Europe, without giving any aid or support to reactionary landlord or capitalist-fascist elements who seek to exploit the progressive national sentiments of the masses. However, we do not take the Stalinists' word for it that all the partisans and partisan bands in Poland, for example, who are fighting against the invading oppressor or against the totalitarian "native" regime, are "Fascists." We are only too well aware of the Stalinist practice of labelling all its opponents as "Fascists." The struggle for national liberation is inseparably bound up in these countries with the fight for all democratic rights and liberties, including the right to free universal suffrage and a free Constituent Assembly. To attempt to substitute for this slogan the slogan of "Soviets" is false and preposterous. In countries like Poland, etc., there is no tradition whatsoever of the revolutionary Soviets established by the Bolshevik Revolution. What has appeared to these peoples in the name of "Sovietism" is the Stalinist reaction which they abhor and against which they are already striving with all their force. As in the case of Western Europe under the Nazi occupation, our support of the struggle for national freedom is not support for the return or restoration to power of the landlords and capitalists. Our demand for the Constituent Assembly is closely linked with the demand for the preservation of nationalized economy under democratic control, with the demand for the land to the peasants, but free from

the police rule of the GPU satrapy.

The attempts of the Stalinist imperialists to consolidate their power and control in Eastern Europe cannot but lead to increased resistance of the masses. This resistance must inevitably take the form of struggle for ousting the invader and establishing the national sovereignty of the occupied lands. The masses of the conquered countries show, as they did during the war, both the organic need and organic capacity to oust the invader. Wherever the masses have had any opportunity to express themselves, they have manifested their hostility to the Stalinists: Austrian and Hungarian elections, mass demonstrations in Rumania, semi-civil war in Poland.

Failure to give staunch support to the movement for national freedom from Stalinist rule (both in the newly occupied coun-

tries as well as in those countries of the "Soviet Union" long ago usurped by the Kremlin autocracy) can only serve, moreover, to delay the inevitable crisis of Stalinism in Russia itself. To preserve itself, to enhance its power and privilege, to maintain its exploitation and oppression of peoples and nations annexed to the Russian empire, the bureaucracy is compelled to saddle the Russian masses with an even vaster bureaucratic monster, with an even vaster police and spy force, with a huge standing army, all of which are directed against the Russian people as well. The bureaucracy is compelled, like the ruling class of the capitalist empires, to deprive the masses of homes and a decent standard of living by concentrating upon preparation for imperialist war and upon production of the means of destruction. The returning soldiers who have seen other

lands under circumstances which puts the Stalinist regime in a truer, that is, a less advantageous light, can only add to the restlessness and dissatisfaction which Stalinism generates among the people. The rise of the most brutal chauvinism in the upper ranks of the bureaucracy, especially the military bureaucracy, must clash with the war-weariness and yearning for peace and security of the people. The crisis of Stalinism cannot be too long postponed. It can weather this crisis if the Russian people feel themselves isolated. Their true ally in the struggle for emancipation is not the Stalinist bureaucracy but the peoples of the oppressed nations who are fighting for national freedom against this bureaucracy. The overturn of the Stalinist ruling class in Russia is now the common *direct* task of the Russian masses and the nations under the Russian heel.

PERSPECTIVES AND TASKS: WESTERN EUROPE

As was the case at the end of the First World War, a revolutionary situation was created in a number of countries at the end of the Second World War. In none of these countries, however, neither in the Axis countries nor in the Western European countries liberated from the rule of the Axis, did the situation develop to the point of a direct proletarian assault upon the bourgeoisie for the seizure of state power. In 1945, the working class did not have the solid bastion and inspiration constituted by Soviet Russia in 1918-1919. It did not have a revolutionary party to lead it in this assault, nor even the substantial nuclei of such parties which could be and were transformed into mass parties almost overnight at the end of the First World War. Instead, the revolutionary groups were either exterminated or completely isolated from the masses, not least of all because of the sterile sectarian or inconsistent course they pursued toward the national revolutionary movements and in the question of Russia and Stalinism during the war. Above all, the masses of Europe, the West included, were more terribly exhausted by the war than ever before and, under the pressure of fascist rule, were imbued with democratic and parliamentary conceptions and illusions. As pointed out in the Workers Party resolution on the National Question in Europe during the war, the masses would not be prepared, once fascism was defeated, to replace one dictatorship with another dictatorship, *even if* the other was the proletarian dictatorship. The political and economic atrocities of fascist totalitarianism could only succeed, under the given circumstances, in evoking among the masses the strongest passion for political democracy, for democratic rights and institutions. Given the fact that decaying capitalism can satisfy this passion less and less, it was necessary for the revolutionary Marxists, as the champions of socialism, to become the champion of all the democratic yearnings of the masses, including their desire for national freedom and representative government, thus demonstrating in practice the inseparable link between the struggle for democracy and the struggle for socialism. This is precisely what the leadership of the Fourth International, faced with an exceptional historic opportunity, failed to do.

The masses quite correctly did not identify their desire for democracy with the restoration of the *status quo ante bellum*, of the power of the old bourgeoisie, either that section of it which fled or that which remained behind as Nazi collaborators. There is no democracy in the abstract, and democracy was not an abstraction in the minds of the masses. They wanted and want democracy—democratic rights, democratic institutions, political democracy in general—not for its sake as an abstract ideal, but as the only means, in their eyes, of organizing or reorganizing the economic and social life of the country in the interests of the masses and for their benefit. It is for this reason that the masses associate the demand for nationalization—which means to them the removal of capitalist control and ownership of the means of production and exchange—with the demand for abolition of the monarchy, where it exists, for the establishment of a sovereign representative national assembly and for the government in that assembly of "their own" parties, i.e., the Social-Democratic or Stalinist parties or both. To one extent or another, this is perfectly clear in such countries as France, Belgium, Holland, Italy, England, Greece and—presently—in Spain.

The instinctive urge of the masses to revolutionize the social foundations and life of their country, heightened by the terrible advancement of the decaying tendencies in capitalism, manifested itself, in the first post-war revolutionary wave, primarily in the struggle against the openly fascist sections of the bourgeoisie or the collaborators, on the one side, and in the struggles for the most democratic and radical parliamentary institutions, through which they aim to establish their domination over society, on the other. This is shown by the stupendous victory of the Labor Party in England, the mass movements and struggles against the monarchy in Belgium, Greece and Italy (and to an extent in Holland), the demand for a popular Constitutional Assembly in France and Italy, by the revival of the old and formerly so discredited social democracy throughout Europe and even by the fact that the Stalinists, whose ears are closely attuned to the masses in this respect, have become the most vociferous "champions" of

the most radical representative democracy, in the same way in which they "championed" the national revolutionary movements during the war.

The "parliamentarism" of the masses today cannot, however, be identified with their parliamentarism following the First World War. The situations are not the same. After the first war, Europe was almost inundated by the revolutionary wave of proletarian Sovietism. Bourgeois democracy, classically represented by the Weimar Republic, was the last line of defense of capitalist society in the main countries outside of Soviet Russia. Following the second war, the struggle for democracy (bourgeois democracy) is directed *not* against the non-existent wave of Sovietism but against all the decaying and reactionary tendencies of capitalism, against fascism, totalitarianism, military and Bonapartist government, national oppression and humiliation, foreign military occupation, etc., etc.

The task of the revolutionists, therefore, is to approach the masses on the political level to which they have been thrust down since the First World War by the decay of capitalism and the decay of the workers' parties, and to raise them once more to the level of independent class action with an independent class (socialist) aim. This task cannot be performed by counterposing the propagandist abstraction of the "United Socialist States of Europe" to the struggle for national liberation, or the propagandist abstraction of Soviets to the struggle for the most radical and most democratic Constituent Assembly, for the most militant and consistent democratic demands. If the masses are to be led to where they should be—in socialist power—they must be taken where they are—in the field of parliamentary democracy. Therein lies the importance of the insistent stress laid by the Workers Party during the war on the prognosis that the fascist domination of Europe would be followed not by a direct struggle for socialist power but by a "democratic interlude" of greater or lesser duration in the course of which the proletariat, at the head of the nation, could once more be mobilized by means of democratic and transitional slogans, for the struggle for class power. Those who denied the "democratic interlude" or were in-

different to the question, were consequently unable to orient themselves or others in the actual class struggle.

The masses correctly tie their economic requirements and demands to political struggle. The political struggle they are actually carrying on centers, however, around parliamentary institutions—not only when they cast their ballots but when they appear in imposing mass demonstrations. Taking this as their point of departure, the revolutionary Marxists must work out, in every European country, a concrete program of action—i.e., an adaptation to their concrete national situation of the transitional program and not a ritualistic repetition of every word in it—aimed at deepening the radicalism of the masses, raising their class consciousness and acquiring in struggle the leadership of the masses without which all talk of “revolution” and “seizure of power” is dilettantism or adventurism. This means, in countries where the question of the Constituent Assembly or Parliament is paramount, a program for the most thorough and radical democratization of the constitution or parliament. It means a social and economic program of the most far-reaching significance, up to and including the nationalization of the means of production and exchange under democratic workers’ control, and above all, the most unreserved assurance of all democratic rights, not only for the people at home but also for the peoples in the nations ruled by the imperialists (India, Indo-China, Algeria, Congo, Indonesia, etc.). It means a continuous campaign of mobilizing the masses for independent action in demanding of the workers’ parties, when they are in office, the most thoroughgoing, unhesitating and consistent carrying out of their own programs, their own promises. It means, in those countries where a bourgeois-labor coalition exists, the demand for breaking the coalition and establishing in its stead a government of the workers’ parties (i.e., those that appear to the masses to be the workers’ parties).

In those countries where it is indicated by the political situation and the relationship of forces, the revolutionary Marxists must put forward the slogan of a Socialist-Communist Government (or government of the Socialist Party, the Communist Party and the trade unions), as part of the work of breaking the workers away from ideological and political collaboration with the bourgeoisie and its political machines. To reject this slogan out of hand would mean to deprive the revolutionary vanguard, in given crises of bourgeois-labor coalition governments, of the central political slogan best calculated to advance the interests and class consciousness of the masses and to bring them in greater numbers under the leadership of the Marxists. To abstain absolutely from this slogan is as sectarian and unjustified—in practice as self-sterilizing—as was abstention from the national revolutionary movements during the war.

However, it is of the greatest importance to understand the limitations and dangers of this slogan. In the first place, it is not identical with the slogan put forward by the Bolsheviks in 1917 for the establishment of a Menshevik-Social Revolutionary government. Both these parties were *democratic* workers (or peasants) parties. In the present case, this holds only of the social democracy but by no means of the Stalinists, who represent a totalitarian party whose conquest of power means not an extension but the extinction of democracy. Therefore, the Marxists can put forward this slogan only after the most careful examination of the actual political situation has revealed that the establishment of such a workers’ coalition government would not signify the assumption of political power by the Stalinist totalitarian machine or be a decisive step in that direction. By the same token, the Marxists do not in any country put forward the slogan of a Stalinist (CP) government. If they advance the slogan of a CP-SP government, it is only under conditions that give adequate assurances that such a government

would not be dominated (as in Poland, Yugoslavia, Eastern Germany, Bulgaria, Rumania, etc.) by the Stalinists. In the second place, such a slogan could be empty at best and treacherous at worst if it were put forward as a cure-all, as a permanent part of our propaganda and agitation (instead of as an exceptional slogan), or if presented by itself. It can have progressive meaning and value only if it is coupled with and subordinated to a practical political program of democratic, transitional demands, without which revolutionists take no responsibility either for the slogan or for the government established in its name.

Finally, in the present European situation, the national question continues to play a role of capital importance for the proletariat of the Western European countries, and that in three respects. First, it is the duty of the revolutionists to make clear to the working class and the middle classes their obligation to struggle against the imperialist oppression that their ruling classes carry on in their own colonies (Asia, Africa, Latin-America). Second, it is their duty to champion the right of national unity and independence of the countries their ruling classes and allies now oppress or occupy in Europe, starting with dismembered and occupied Germany. Third, it is their duty to point out that the small or weakened “independent” countries of Western Europe are themselves being reduced to vassal states, to pawns in the rivalry between Anglo-American and Russian imperialism, and that even the remaining independence of these lands is threatened by eventual domination by either one of these reactionary giants. A correct and active revolutionary position on the national question in the Western European countries is not only mandatory upon the Fourth International but is one of the most effective instruments in freeing the working class from the ideological and organizational control of the Russian Stalinists and the Anglo-American social-democrats.

PERSPECTIVES AND TASKS: THE COLONIAL WORLD

World War II marks a monumental turning point in the struggle of the colonial peoples for freedom, above all in the populous countries of Asia. The war brought about a decisive weakening of the old colonial powers, including Great Britain, the ancient bulwark of the colonial system. The internal rotteness and general impotency of the British colonial regimes in Asia, revealed by the easy Japanese conquests, the military defeat and occupation of France and the Netherlands, the utter and obvious dependence of the old colonial powers upon American military and economic aid, added up to underscore the fact that these powers were no longer able to play their old role in this sphere. The weakening of the old colonial powers in terms of economic strength, military power, finances, independence and prestige was accompanied by a rising tide of national consciousness, aggressiveness and self-confidence on the part of the oppressed peoples, above all in Indonesia, India and Indo-China. The readiness of the colonial powers to offer extensive concessions to the colonies in terms of “self-rule” is an indica-

tion, not only of the severity of their plight, but that the traditional “democratic” colonial system of imperialist exploitation is coming to an end. Its place is being taken by the “American system” of reliance upon economic domination and the political manipulation of formally independent or semi-independent native political regimes. However, this system is possible only to a vastly wealthy power, which means, today, the United States. The displacement of the old colonial system is, therefore, simultaneously the displacement of the British Empire and its satellites (French, Dutch, Portuguese, Belgian empire) by American imperialism as the super-exploiter of the economically-backward peoples. The century-old technique of American domination of Latin America is being put to use on a world scale. It is the technique of economic penetration, of corrupting, bribing and subsidizing native bourgeois politicians, of American ideological infiltration (schools, missions, periodicals, radio, press) and of practical “charities” that pay long-term dividends (roads, hospitals, sanitation, etc.).

An aspect of this “American approach” is revealed in the occupation of Japan. Unhurried by economic pressures which force less wealthy imperialist powers to an immediate policy of plunder and enslavement (Germany, Russia), the United States sets about the reorganization of Japan with a deliberateness that aims to constitute it as the bastion of American power in Asia. The American policy in Japan is designed to achieve the following ends:

(a) To undermine and discredit the old ruling cliques in order to eliminate them as rallying points of national resistance.

(b) To utilize the extreme political backwardness of the Japanese masses to secure a mass base for American rule (specifically, for the rule of the new strata of quislings which it is developing) by identifying American occupation with democracy and liberalism.

(c) To appear before the oppressed masses of the rest of Asia as a liberating force in contrast to the old colonial powers and therefore secure mass favor for itself as against the latter.

(d) To secure a base for itself in Japan and through it in Asia from which to oppose the growing pressure of Russia upon the Far East and prepare its strategical positions for the eventual conflict with Russia.

However, the continued economic crises, the tremendous and disruptive political convulsions, and the violent class and national collisions which will keynote the world scene in the coming period will not permit American imperialism the stability necessary to consolidate its world empire. The American latecomers in this field face not the prospects of the British Empire of a century ago but of the sorely pressed British Empire of today. The prospects for Asia, with its billion oppressed people, is for a rising tide of national feeling and increasing struggles for national freedom. The attempts of American imperialism to utilize its favored economic position to secure support for its "benevolent" domination of the colonies has only a short term chance of success.

During the war, the revolutionists found it impossible to support any of the bourgeois national movements in the East. The proletariat was not prepared to lead the national revolutionary movement in its own name and with its own program. The bourgeoisie of the colonial countries, in accordance with its inner nature and social-historical position, was unable to lead a serious struggle for national independence against imperialism and could use the slogan of national independence only for the purpose of hiding

the fact of its service to one of the two big imperialist camps or the other. The analysis and prognosis of the Workers Party was confirmed in fact. To give support to any of the colonial countries "fighting imperialism" during the war could only mean giving objective support to one imperialist coalition against the other, in violation of the basic principles of revolutionary internationalism. This has now been demonstrated with sufficient clarity and conclusiveness by the outcome of the war in China. The revolutionary Marxists who supported China, even under the Chiang-Kai-shek bourgeoisie, against Japan before the world war broke out in the East, could not support China during the war without becoming in fact supporters of American imperialism; any more than they could support the Indonesian bourgeoisie or petty bourgeoisie which, for "strategical" reasons, found it "necessary" to cooperate with the Japanese imperialists and to take political responsibilities under the occupation of the Japanese. At the end of the war, China finds itself not independent (except of Japanese rule!) but a pawn in the growing conflict between American and Russian imperialism, and, even as a pawn, still deprived of the crown colonies of the British Empire in China.

It is our task to help the national revolutionary movements in the colonies understand the real role of American imperialism; just as it is the task of the Fourth International as a whole to make clear the role of all the imperialist powers in the colonies,

Stalinist imperialism included. The colonial movements, now that the war is over, are entirely justified in seeking to play off American imperialism against its rivals and to maneuver among them in the interests of national liberation. That is why the revolutionary Marxists, for all their class criticism, support the nationalist movement in Indonesia and similar movements in other colonies. At the same time we must constantly warn these movements against permitting themselves to become mere pawns in the hands of the "less harsh" imperialism against a rival imperialism.

In this sense, the Marxists support all genuinely popular national movements in the colonies. This does not hold for such struggles as are now taking place in the Chinese "civil war" where one side, while representing the national bourgeoisie, is now merely the outpost of American imperialism, while the other side, in spite of its peasant composition, is a tool of Stalinist imperialism which aims at dismembering China in order to annex its wealthiest section, the North, to the Russian Stalinist Empire. The reactionary character of modern Stalinism is once again underscored by its work in converting a genuinely plebeian, democratic, national movement into a tool of totalitarian imperialism aimed at the very heart of the democratic and national interests of China. Support of this movement today can have no other effect than to extend the Stalinist empire and bring under its subjugation a large portion of the land and people of China.

THE WORKERS PARTY AND THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL

The Fourth International was established to bring to an end the crisis in leadership which alone has stood in the way of the victory of the socialist proletariat in our epoch. During the war, the Fourth International ceased to exist as an effective, organized, centralized International. A number of objective reasons, including the greatest difficulties under which the revolutionary movement ever had to operate in all its long history, may be adduced to explain this collapse. These are reasons which were beyond the control of any one or any group in the International. However, insofar as the collapse was due to reasons which were under the control of the International, the responsibility for the failure of the International, marked at one and the same time by its silence on the most important political problems of the time and by its unofficial tolerance or encouragement of the grossest political mistakes, lies primarily upon the shoulders of the leadership of the Socialist Workers Party.

The sections of the International survived the great trial of the war, even without international guidance and leadership. They did not, like the Stalinists, social-democrats, anarchists, centrists and syndicalists, capitulate to the wave of chauvinism and social-patriotism, and in that respect they held up the banner of socialist internationalism in the great tradition of Marx, Engels, Liebknecht, Luxemburg, Lenin and Trotsky.

They survived a terror, above all in Europe, which both the bourgeoisie and the Stalinists mercilessly directed against them and which martyred the best of our cadres and our militants.

However, in the main political analysis and line which distinguished the International's official leadership and made its imprint upon the course of virtually all the sections, the most catastrophic errors were made.

By its insistent repetition of the slogan of "unconditional defense of the Soviet Union" the International capitulated objectively to Stalinist imperialism and contributed its share to the disorientation of the vanguard of the proletariat. The reconstruction and future of the International depend upon the firmest and most clearly-grasped repudiation of this slogan. They require also the abandonment of the now utterly reactionary theory that Russia is a "workers' state" because property is still nationalized. The Workers Party categorically rejects this theory. While propagating its own theory throughout the International and the working class, the theory that Russia represents a reactionary social order, bureaucratic collectivism, the Workers Party is prepared to cooperate most closely with those groups and sections of the International which, while not sharing the full views of the Workers Party, have nevertheless abandoned the reactionary theory of the "workers' state" and the equally reactionary slogan of "unconditional defense." Therefore without relinquishing its theoretical position

or abandoning the theoretical discussion, the Workers Party will make a political bloc with all groups who now reject the theory of the "workers' state" and the slogan of "unconditional defense."

By its position on the national revolutionary movements in Europe, which was tantamount to sectarian abstentionism at worst and inconsistency and failure to understand the revolutionary tasks of the time, the leadership of the International failed to help the European sections seize the exceptional opportunity to emerge from their isolation and into the leadership of wide sections of the revolutionary peoples.

By its tacit support of and failure to condemn the opportunism and the bureaucratism in the SWP, and by its adoption of similar bureaucratic practices against minorities in the International, the present leadership has promoted the evil of monolithism in the movement and placed in danger the entire future of the International. It has failed to intervene firmly, and fraternally, against the bureaucratic opposition of the SWP leadership to the unification of the movement in the United States, and failed correspondingly to give support to the wholly progressive struggle for unity conducted by the SWP Minority. It has permitted the most disloyal and ignorant campaign to be directed against the German section of the International, whose revolutionary and political integrity is beyond question, and has now itself climaxed this campaign by the most bureaucratic act in the history of the Trot-

skyist movement, namely, reading the German section out of the International because of its theoretical position without previous notification to the German section, without previous discussion of its position in the International, and without affording the German section the elementary opportunity to defend itself before its accusers.

Nothing less than a complete reorganization of the leadership of the International can give the slightest assurance of a progressive and fruitful future. Nothing less than a loyally prepared and democratically

conducted discussion throughout the International of all the questions in controversy, with full opportunity for every member to study the documents available, is required to put the International back on revolutionary rails. This means a discussion, in particular, of the theories and views put forward by the Workers Party, the German section and the Minorities in the SWP and the French party.

(Adopted by National Convention of the Workers Party of the United States, June 1946.)

Correspondence...

Editor:

I'd like to comment on the Avel Victor review of Philip Rahv's current anthology: *Discovery of Europe*. Victor seems to misunderstand the process of cultural diffusion and draw false conclusions concerning American art. His opening remarks state that whereas America is long on pocket-book, it is short on culture: "Modern European economy must be oiled with a stream of American credits; the American culture must be nourished on the stimulation of European art and writing. There is little more bleak than the credit outlook of a French bank or a purely American style in art."

Is Victor suggesting here an astonishing, and hitherto unknown, law of cultural values?—that a nation possesses or does not possess a "culture" according to whether it possesses wealth? Precisely what is meant by this term, "culture"? According to the sociologist (but perhaps not to the Marxist?) any society owns a culture. Or does Victor use the term to mean, roughly, "formal art"? If so, he mis-uses it; that usage remains illegitimate, despite all the thousands of literary tea parties, and in any case Victor should spell his word properly—"cultchah."

But to return to the case of the cultured French bank: is the bleak outlook of this French bank meaningfully related in any manner with "a purely American style in art"? Just what is "a purely American style in art"? Could there be such a thing? How? Would Victor illustrate this? But perhaps he has in mind the sand paintings of the American Indian. If so, I absolutely fail to see any connection with a French bank.

I stand, with tomahawk in hand, upon this thesis. My thesis is: that Columbus' *Discovery of America* is more important than Philip Rahv's *Discovery of Europe*. I believe it is vastly more important. To elaborate:

The *Discovery of America* eventuated in the development of a society founded on materials and placed in a situation without historical precedent. There was never any such great happy raping of an entire continent in modern times. This terrific rape was a thing unto itself. And, it produced certain societal peculiarities.

First, there were no situations in those days for the origination or continuation of formal art, such as literature, scored music, etc. Such things are naturally an increment

of leisure time, social circumstance. But wherever trods the human foot you'll find art, if not formal art. America was not only touched by the human foot, it was totally trampled.

The "original" Americans were themselves mostly Europeans. Three non-European influences can be detected: the American Indian, the African Negro, and the American continent itself, or, more exactly, the American situation. These influences tended to re-shape the culture of the European-Americans. During the process, cultural ties with Europe played a tremendous role, and they certainly continue to play such a tremendous role. What has been evolved, however, is a society or culture that can only be called American. It is a synthesis of many different things. It was not a few writers visiting Europe and discovering it—the process was far grander, and it must be added, a great deal more subtle.

Contrary to Victor's mournful remarks, which amount to fashionable pessimism among other things, America possesses a powerful store, or foundation, of "art." It can be mentioned that there have been a number of great American writers, particularly in the past two generations. Among a handful of New Orleans Negroes has developed an astounding and revolutionary art in music: New Orleans jazz. In both these fields has come the self-conscious and self-determining maturity of formal art.

In questions of art or culture, nationalism is in a sense not to be avoided. At present it does not need to be pointed out that this is not an internationalistic world, that intercultural exchanges suffer many severe and well-known limitations. Victor has attacked the cultural heritage of those human beings now living in the United States. Thus, he says, the American artist must not merely look to Europe and attempt to learn as much as possible from Europe, he must look *only* to Europe. He may study James Joyce and Stendhal, but why bother with bumbling old Theodore Dreiser, an uncultured American French bank specialist and money bag?

This attitude is not only naive, but it reflects an abysmal snobbery. When alienation from American capitalist forces seemingly results in such a childlike alienation from all aspects of American culture, snobbery is the word. A pure, bold, snobbish expropriation of the values of literature is

what takes place here. Or is it so bold and pure? Consider the style in which Victor presents these attitudes.

The literary effect of the review is that of jargon decked out in stylistic cellophane. When will the prose of the long-deceased English gentleman of letters return permanently to its coffin? When will the gift of literary Stalinism—i.e., jargonistic incoherence—cease to plague defenseless readers? Will the day come when a reviewer will modestly sit down and try to communicate his ideas in simple, direct language? Victor's review is a combination of such dead prose and tiresome jargon. His opening sentence is totally beyond comprehension: "Since the future of the world is certain to be international if it is not barbaric, Americans will be the solvent or insolvent heirs of the culture of ages." No—such infuriating jargon as this is not very bold, and not very pure.

In passing, it might be well to indicate that the attitudes embraced by Victor are doomed to result in cultural impotence, an impotence of spirit. The practical effects of this snobbery and impotence can be seen in the dead pages of *Partisan Review*.

CALDER WILLINGHAM.

Editor:

In the February 1947 issue of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL there appears an abbreviated letter by W. H. Emmett of Australia, in criticism of my articles on Luxemburg's *Theory of Accumulation*, which were published in the April and May 1946 issues. In all fairness to Comrade Emmett it should be stated that in the unabridged letter he wrote that of the fifteen books I quoted, "ten of these works are out of my reach completely." Among these were Luxemburg's *Theory of Accumulation* or her *Anti-critique*; Marx's *Theories of Surplus Value*; Lenin's dispute with the Narodniki; and Bukharin's answer to Luxemburg's work on accumulation. He also wrote that in *Anti-Duehring* he could not find the passage quoted. (The page number was wrongly listed as 349; it should have been 312-3.) Consequently, he was tendering his criticism on the basis of the three volumes of *Capital*. Without this pertinent bit of information, some of the statements in Emmett's criticism become incomprehensible.

For example, he writes:

"The phenomenon of accumulating capital is quite independent of a 'closed society' and quite independent of any pre-capitalist or 'non-capitalist surroundings.'" (My emphasis—F. F.)

Now, if I agreed with him, this would in no way change the fact that (1) Marx posited his theory of accumulation of capital in a closed society, and (2) that the very life-stream of Luxemburg's theory of accumulation, which she counterposed to that of Marx, ran through "non-capitalist surroundings." How then could I write a restatement of Marx's theory and a critique of Luxemburg's as if the accumulation of capital were "quite independent of any pre-capitalist or non-capitalist surroundings"?

Emmett proceeds doggedly down his own road, insisting that while the idea of a closed society (i.e., a society consisting only of workers and capitalists, from which both

"third groups" and foreign trade are excluded) "might be correct in some sense or other . . . , it does not seem capable of any proper application" in the question of capitalist accumulation. And he concludes:

"Forest's reference to 'the exclusion of foreign trade as having nothing to do fundamentally with' the class conflict also seems rather forced. . . . But now if 'foreign trade' were always to be 'excluded,' even to the extent that 'Marx would not be moved from his premise,' how could Marx tell us that foreign trade is an indispensable part of capitalist production?"

Since I presented nothing new in my study that had not previously been stated by Marx and defended by Lenin, I will let Lenin give the answer. Although, Lenin wrote, "it is impossible to imagine a capitalist nation without foreign trade because there is no such nation," nevertheless "The theory of realization must take for its construction a closed capitalist society, i.e., to abstract the process of expansion of capitalism from our countries. . . ." Otherwise, one would fall into the trap of the petty-bourgeois critics who base their critique of capitalism on "the incorrectness of circulation," whereas "it is necessary to base this on the character of the *evolution of production relations*." (*Collected Works*, I, p. 32-3, Vol. II, pp. 40, 419-20, in Russian—my emphasis, F. F.)

Emmett can think that the question of accumulation can be considered *both* independently from the question of a closed society and from the question of "third groups" only because he has transformed the question of accumulation from a problem of production, that is *class*, relation, to a mere technical question. To him accumulation of capital "just means the increasing capital outfit of any employer at all, or any industrial capital in general." Hence, he can come to the conclusion:

"The question as to *which* or *what* capital or *where* should never arise. The formula, or label, $c+v+s$, definitely and quite sufficiently marks off the capital under discussion as industrial capital, otherwise *stand-alone* capital."

It was, however, not I, but Marx, who made the point that: "It is not the quantity but the destination of the given elements of simple reproduction, which is changed, and this change is the material basis of a subsequent reproduction on an enlarged scale." (*Capital*, II, p. 592.)

So insistent was Marx in demonstrating that it is not the *thing*, or *quantity* (c plus v plus s) which was important, but the *relationship* (c to v) that he began his first diagrammatic presentation of expanded reproduction by choosing a total whose absolute volume was *smaller* than that of simple reproduction!

Accumulation and Crises

In viewing the complex question of accumulation as if it "just means the increasing capital outfit of any employer at all," Emmett is sweeping aside Marx's greatest contribution to the theory of expanded reproduction, his division of the whole of social production into but two major departments: Department I producing means of production and Department II producing means of consumption. It is this division

which enables Marx to cut through the whole tangle of markets and to show that:

"The difficulty, then, does not consist in the analysis of the social product in values. It arises in the comparison of the component parts of the value of the social product with its *material* elements." (*Capital*, II, p. 499.)

The contradiction between the value and material forms of capital erupts in crises. For Emmett, however, this whole problem does not exist. He writes in an offhand manner:

"It seems necessary to notice that 'Accumulation' is not any direct cause of the crises. So far from 'Accumulation' being directly the cause of crises, the subject of 'Accumulation,' etc., is broached by Marx in his Volume II only well after he had already demonstrated how the non-confirming and unruly fixed capital was causing the crises."

Now, the fact that Marx deals with crises before he comes to the question of accumulation or expanded production in not at all due to the fact that accumulation "is not any direct causes of crises" but because Marx's whole method of presentation of the problem rests on the fact that if you fully understand the problem of simple reproduction, expanded reproduction will present no difficulties, for there are no new problems in expanded reproduction that aren't *implicitly* present in simple reproduction. Accumulation of capital aggravates the contradictions of capitalism and brings them to the breaking point. But the innermost cause of crises remains the fact that labor, in the process of production, and not in the market, creates a greater value than it itself is. And that the ever greater portion of the surplus value extracted from the worker goes back into producing ever greater quantities of constant capital, or what Emmett calls "the non-confirming and unruly fixed capital." But so directly is this accumulation of capital connected with crises that Marx devotes the better part of one of his volumes of *Theories of Surplus Value* to this very problem. If Emmett is unaware of the most famous portion of Marx's *Theories* "Accumulation of Capital and Crises"—he should not be unaware of the fact that the part to which he himself refers to in Volume III of *Capital* ("The Law of the Falling Tendency of the Rate of Profit") is so wholly immersed in the accumulation of capital and crises that it could very well bear such a sub-title. Volume III, as Comrade Emmett must know, was written as Book III of Volume II of *Capital*. Emmett and I seem indeed to be speaking in entirely different languages not only insofar as the vast Marxist literature on the subject of accumulation is concerned, but insofar as Marx's theory itself is concerned. The theory remains, for him, not only unconnected from crises but from class conflict.

"There is no sort of mention about any conflict of persons," he writes, "the real 'conflict' in question is merely one of conditions, and such conflict of conditions is one of the Internal Contradictions in the operation of the 'law,' the 'falling tendency of the rate of profit.'"

I rubbed my eyes and reread the above passage a half dozen times before I could believe what I saw black on white. Emmett, *please*, doesn't the conflict of conditions re-

fer to the conflict of the production *relationship* between capital and labor? What else does the famous passage of Marx in that very chapter refer to?

"The real barrier of capitalist production is capital itself. It is the fact that capital and its self-expansion appear as the starting and closing point, as the motive and aim of production; that production is merely production for capital and not vice versa, the means of production mere means for the ever expanding system of the life process for the benefit of the *society* of producers." (*Capital*, III, p. 293.)

In analyzing the "Internal Contradictions in the operation of the 'law,' the 'falling tendency of the rate of profit,'" wasn't Marx's whole point to prove that:

"It is here demonstrated in a purely economic way, that is, from a bourgeois point of view, within the confines of capitalist understanding, from the standpoint of capitalist production itself, that it has a barrier, that it is relative, that it is not an absolute, but only a historical mode of production corresponding to a definite and limited epoch in the development of the material conditions of production." (*Ibid*, pp. 304-5.)

How can a Marxist limit himself to these very confines! This, it seems to me, could be done only under the conditions that, for Emmett, the theory of value is just an *economic* theory unconnected with the class struggle. Emmett can write: "Despite her wide research, Forest's two articles will not withstand much economic probing or analysis," only because, for him, Marx's economic doctrine is completely divorced from his conception of the historical limitations of capitalist society and the inevitability of the proletarian revolution.

F. FOREST.

Editors:

F. Forest's article, *The Nature of the Russian Economy*, is a milestone in the history of Marxist thinking. Trotsky's theory of Stalinist Russia as a "degenerated workers' state" and the WP's rationalized modification of that theory have been demolished. Can any other conclusion be made after a careful reading of this article? If the haywire ultra-leftist zigzags of the Johnstone Minority (deplorable but logical results of their failure to act on their conclusion in regards to the nature of the Soviet Union) prevent the members of the WP and the International from giving this paper the serious and sober examination it deserves, it will be nothing short of criminal. It comes as a terrific shock to realize that had this article appeared ten years ago the vanguard of the international working class would now be well armed to lead the struggle against the *two-headed* monster of world capitalism.

While pointing out the mistake Trotsky made in *The Revolution Betrayed* in dismissing the idea that Russia might be a state capitalist society, Comrade Forest should also have called attention to the astounding statement Trotsky makes on page 246. He writes: "Such a regime (state capitalist) never existed, however, and because of the profound contradictions among the proprietors themselves, never will exist—the more so since, in its quality of universal repository of capitalist property, the state

would be too tempting an object of social revolution." Today it seems incredible that Trotsky would have used such an unscientific argument that because such a society had not previously existed, therefore it could not exist; further, that because the profound contradictions existing in a traditional capitalist society would prevent state capitalism from developing (even this is questionable in the light of the direction of the Nazi state before its collapse), the same would also apply to Russia; finally, no one was ever more aware than Trotsky that the Russian state under Stalin was, as it still is, a "tempting object of social revolution" but has managed to maintain itself only through the most ruthless and complete suppression of its people in all modern history.

That chapter on State Capitalism in *The Revolution Betrayed* will remain one of the costliest examples of that tendency of Trotsky's to be carried away by abstract arguments which Lenin so much deplored.

J. LOVEJOY.

Chicago

Editor:

In the January issue of *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL* there occurs, in the article on the coal strike, a sentence worded so ambiguously that an uncharitable opponent, seizing upon it in isolation, could use it with effect against the Workers Party. (Page 6, 2nd column, 1st paragraph, 3rd sentence.)

This reads: "But Marxists must gauge it from the long range point of view, not from the utterly irresponsible concept that every sharpening of class conflict, at all times and under all conditions, must receive the support of the revolutionary wing of labour."

I suggest that the latter part of the sentence should read thus: "—the utterly irresponsible concept that every sharpening of class conflict to a point liable to precipitate a decisive showdown between the organized workers and the state machine, should be advocated by the revolutionary wing of labour."

It is the phrase "receive the support" with which I quarrel. Leaving aside the existence of unscrupulous opponents, it seems to me that a completely honest worker could misconstrue the meaning in such a way as to believe that the WP might stand aside from the picket line if it thought a strike was ill considered. The true meaning is clear enough—the danger of "July Days" and most especially when the revolutionary movement scarcely exists as a movement. The need for the party to act as a responsible Marxist leadership, to advise against actions which it considers foredoomed to defeat and disaster—while, nevertheless, participating in those which break over its head—to advocate the switching of pressure to another flank, etc. In a word, to act in accordance with Marxist political strategy, and not function as a group of simple industrial militants. With this analysis I entirely agree, but it is best not to leave the slightest room for possible misunderstanding or misrepresentation.

England

R. B.

We are in entire agreement with the point made by R. B. and are grateful for his having called it to our attention. Our point was entirely confined to the political policy in-

involved in the question of sharpening the class conflict. While it should go without saying that Marxists support every struggle of the workers against the class enemy, regardless of how critical they may be of the course being pursued in a given instance, care must be taken at all times to prevent any doubts or misunderstanding on this score.

The history of Marxism is replete with examples of the revolutionary party opposing the sharpening or joining of the struggle while throwing themselves wholeheartedly into the struggle itself. Outstanding examples are Marx's attitude on the Paris Commune and the role of the Bolsheviks in the above-mentioned "July Days" during the Russian Revolution.—Editors.

Editor:

The discussions by Leder and Judd in the November issue of *THE NEW INTERNATIONAL*, valuable though they are, suffer in their analyses of Germany during the war years from the defect that has characterized just about every similar discussion—the lack of any consideration of the role of the tremendous foreign population. Including foreigners in concentration camps, prisoners of war, the various categories of slave workers, they numbered at least twelve million. This excludes the large number of German prisoners of one type or other. A great potential for revolt, they were, instead, an important instrument for its prevention. For some reason, historical and journalistic accounts have ignored them except to describe their travail under the Nazi rule. How did they fit into the Anti-Fascist Committees? How did they function in the much-neglected popular coups preceding the arrival of Allied armies in such cities as Augsburg and Halle, or the attempted insurrection in Munich? What was their exact relation to the German worker throughout? Some stories have been written of close fraternization in concentration camps and among former inmates after their liberation. Otherwise, the only relevant item I have seen was a Russian propaganda pamphlet describing the aid some Russian prisoners gave to the advancing army in the capture of a Silesian industrial town.

So, all we have is the comparison of personal experiences and fragmentary testimony, unquestionably very inadequate evidence. My own impressions were these: The PWs and foreign workers generally lived in a world apart from German society. For Russians, Poles, and most others from enemy Eastern European countries, the isolation was fairly complete. Almost all who were not on farms lived in camps under semi-military regulations, which they usually left only for work or some sort of official business. Rural workers stayed on their respective farms and, except for a few domestic servants, lived in barns. They were all barred from places of commercial entertainment, rarely visited friends, were even prevented from travelling to church. Their hostility toward Germans, per se, was marked, and was, to a great extent, reciprocated by the Germans. This attitude has continued after the war among the thousands of Polish DP's remaining. Jack Porter's discussion in a recent *Labor Action* article of the inability of Polish and German Socialists living

in the same town to meet together was a dramatic example.

The slave workers and PWs from Western Europe (France, Italy, etc.) usually had more privileges, including more freedom of movement. Their rations (except for PWs) often approximated those of the Germans, though they conspicuously lacked the added tidbits the latter generally acquired by black market operations, barter and gifts from soldiers. They very frequently worked side by side with German workers at similar jobs. But the distinction between them and the Germans was ever present. Most striking was the usual monopoly of air raid shelters by Germans, hardly a minor item. Under these conditions and with the violent nationalism engendered by the war, fraternization, outside of the concentration camp, was rare and superficial. Despite their fundamentally common interests, the German and foreign worker failed to unite against their common oppressor, the Nazi régime. Without that unity, any significant revolt was out of the question.

It should be pointed out that those to whom the anti-Nazis of all nationalities in Germany looked for leadership—the Allied and Stalinist propagandists—helped maintain that division. Their anti-German chauvinism significantly encouraged mutual distrust. There naturally was no call for revolt from them. This should amaze no one with any political acumen, but it was from them that instructions were awaited. The Stalinist armies did at least ask for assistance from Russia in aiding their advance, and, according to their official accounts, valuable help was frequently given. The Western armies, however, took no chances. Their official broadcasts over Radio Luxemburg had one theme even for foreign slave workers in Germany: "Get out of our way."

Possibly some better evidence might reveal many examples of conspicuous large scale fraternization. I certainly hope so. But, meanwhile I think it imperative for anyone writing or even thinking about events in Germany during the war years to give the problem serious consideration.

WILLIAM BARTON.

WANTED!

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Anti-Semitism and the Polish People

A Criticism and A Reply

Editor:

The appearance of L. Rudzienski's oversimplified and partly distorted survey of Polish anti-Semitism in THE NEW INTERNATIONAL without a hint of editorial criticism and disagreement is more than a little disturbing.

Unfortunately space does not permit me to discuss in this letter all of the many false historical generalizations which abound in his article. I shall confine myself in this letter to an attempt to cast doubt on his interpretation of anti-Semitism in present-day Poland.

The political content of Rudzienski's version is suspiciously identical with that contained in the communiques issued by the *American Polonia* and the PPS in which, for all intents and purposes, entire responsibility for the pogroms is thrown on the Stalinist regime and its provocateurs. According to these, the pogroms are not at all the expressions of a widespread, popular, mass based, indigenous anti-Semitism but the *artificial* provocation of Stalinist agents.

This attempt to absolve the opposition parties and the Polish masses of all responsibility and guilt is morally not too far removed from the other variant of the provocateur theory of pogrom origins advanced by the Stalinists. The latter cast Gen. Anders, the NSZ and the PSL (Mikolaczuk's peasant party) in the provocateur role.

This lumping of the PSL together with the NSZ (reactionary armed bands who played a leading part in the anti-Semitic lynchings) is part of the criminal Stalinist game in which Jewish blood is used to smear and discredit the political opposition. In this connection it is important to bear in mind that this dirty Stalinist game is facilitated by the fact that up to the Kielce massacre the PSL shut its eyes to the anti-Semitic propaganda campaigns of its friends and supporters.

The PSL defense that its declaration on the Kielce pogrom was confiscated and that its newspaper, the *Gazette Ludowa*, was prevented by governmental press censorship from adequately condemning the pogrom, loses much of its force when one examines the Cardinal Hlond-like statement made by Mikolaczuk in an *uncensored* press interview several days after the ghastly event of Kielce; "The PSL is against political and racial struggle based on political violence."

This inadequate (to say the least) statement seems designed to "condemn" the pogrom without alienating the various anti-Semitic and reactionary tendencies which hung on to the coattails of the PSL.

Both the Stalinist and Rudzienski-PPS variants of the provocateur theory of pogrom origins give, in effect, a clean bill of health to the Polish masses who participated in the lynchings and to the still greater mass which had deep sympathies for the pogroms and gave the lynchers moral support. These absolutions are moral and political swindles.

The Kielce crowd, approximately 5,000

strong, was a large and representative cross-section of the Kielce population. It included thousands of petty-bourgeois and workers (from the great Ludvikov factories), intellectuals, Catholic priests and militiamen.

For seven hours, this mass, calmly and without haste, in broad daylight and in the center of the city, sadistically tortured to death several dozen Jews (who had been disarmed and turned over to the mob by the Stalinist militia) *without interference or intervention by any police, military or political agency. Not a single party (including the PSL which exercised great influence in the district) lifted a finger to intervene in any manner whatsoever.*

Couple the mass participation in the Kielce lynching with the fact, that when the Stalinist puppet regime sentenced nine lynch mob leaders to death, thousands upon thousands of workers in Lodz and other factory towns went out on strike in protest against the death sentences, and the conclusion that the pogroms are expressive of a powerful, deep-seated and long-standing popular anti-Semitism becomes inescapable.

How can one say, as does Rudzienski, that "the *principal* cause of anti-Semitism in Poland is Stalinist policy" and that the Stalinists are "*artificially* fomenting" the pogroms in Poland? (my emphasis—E. F.)

To seriously advance this thesis Rudzienski must be prepared to do two things:

1. To deny the popular, spontaneous, mass character of the pogroms.

2. To prove that the NSZ bands, who are guilty of hundreds of individual assaults and lynchings of Jews and who provide the leadership in the mass pogroms, are Stalinist agents.

It is not sufficient merely to establish that the Stalinist regime *failed to prevent and suppress* the Kielce massacre *when they could easily have done so* but let it take place so that they could use it for their dirty ends. The fact still remains that the massacres themselves were the work of anti-Semitic sections of the Polish masses led by NSZ elements. Rudzienski presents no facts that would deny the latter contention. Vigorous assertions to the contrary are not enough.

The published details of the anti-Semitic activities in Stalinist Poland seem to point in a direction away from Rudzienski's thesis and to indicate that the anti-Semitic tendencies of the Polish petty-bourgeois play not a "secondary role" but a principle one in the development of anti-Semitism in present-day Poland.

Rudzienski's lumping of all opponents of his thesis into the same pot with those who believe that "the anti-Semitism of the Polish people is 'biological,'" is sheer demagoguery.

To say, for example, that anti-Negroism in the South has widespread, deep, popular roots is not the same as affirming that the Southern whites are "biologically" anti-Negro. By fulminating against the latter

generalization one does not disprove the former.

Rudzienski's resort to a theory of artificial provocation to explain the phenomena of anti-Semitism in post-World War II Poland is, in part, an extension of his false premise that under the Nazi occupation real solidarity characterized the relations between the Jewish and Polish masses of that country. One wishes that Rudzienski were able to cite specific *acts* of material aid to the Warsaw ghetto fighters rather than "*documents*" of the proletarian and human solidarity" to prove his claim that "the Polish workers' movement lent all possible moral and material aid" to the heroes of the Warsaw ghetto uprising in April 1943. (My emphasis—E. F.)

In conclusion I would like to point out that I consider myself a partisan of Polish freedom and national liberation from the oppressive, imperialist tyranny of Stalinist Russia. Nevertheless, it seems to me that the cause of Polish liberation is ill served by whitewashing those elements in Polish life who share the guilt of Kielce.

EDWARD FINDLEY.

THE REPLY

The editors of THE NEW INTERNATIONAL seek to edit it in the spirit of free scientific inquiry within the general framework of Marxist thought. As a result, there is no effort to counter-pose "an official" view in reply to every aspect of a subject dealt with in a signed article. This is above all true where the subject matter is not directly related to current political questions as in the fields of history, philosophy, anthropology, literature, psychoanalysis, economic theory, etc. Where the general line of an article is in direct conflict with the view represented by the magazine, it is published under the heading of "discussion article." The general line of the articles by A. Rudzienski on the problems of the Polish labor movement is in accord with the views we have expressed editorially (September 1946), as well as with the views expressed regularly in *Labor Action*. The specific criticisms made in the above letter by Edward Findley will, no doubt, be dealt with directly by the author of the articles in question. However, in view of the seriousness of the charges, we will express our views on several of the questions which deal with matters of known fact or of general political concepts.

The real facts of the Kielce pogrom are not yet established in detail. This can only be done by an international commission of investigation representing various tendencies of the labor movement and having authority to conduct an inquiry on the spot, including access to all pertinent documents relating to the incident. What is known

about Kielce is what Findley himself records in his letter. The central fact which refers to the question of the Stalinists' guilt is contained in Findley's parenthetical insertion, "...tortured to death several dozen Jews (who had been disarmed and turned over to the mob by the Stalinist militia)." The responsibility of providing protection to persecuted citizens rests in the first place upon the authorities. If the Stalinist militia, the main armed force for the preservation of "law and order," turned the Jews over to the mob, the guilt of the Stalinist regime should be considered established beyond a doubt. Their participation in the pogrom must be considered to have been explicit. To the extent that the political opposition, mainly the Peasant Party, was in a position to intervene against the pogromists and did not, they too bear the guilt for the barbarous spectacle. However, it is exceedingly difficult to establish the facts about the role of the Peasant Party. Here above all we have no facts, only surmises, like Findley's about the influence of the Mikalyczuk movement in the area. The guilt of the Stalinist militia, however, is established.

The fact that the workers struck in protest against the execution of the "nine lynch mob leaders" cannot be accepted as evidence of anti-Semitism. It must first be established that the persons executed were the guilty ones. We would be most foolish to accept the word of the Warsaw regime for this. If the local Stalinist militia was guilty of turning the victims over to the mob, why should we believe that their Warsaw chiefs dealt even-handed justice in seeking out the pogromists? Is there not extreme plausibility on the side of Rudzinski's charge that the Stalinist agent provocateurs stir up the pogroms and that the Stalinist police utilize them as an occasion to frame up and liquidate political oppositionists? Is it not possible that the strikes were on behalf of victims of Beirut's GPU and not in defense of pogromists?

We know from all experiences with pogroms and lynchings throughout history that the actual participation in the mob actions usually embraces an infinitesimal percentage of the population. That the actual participants also usually have the sympathy of wider circles goes without saying. But even these wider circles need not represent more than a minority of the population.

Rudzinski has never denied the prevalence of anti-Semitism in Poland. On the contrary, his articles have sought to trace this characteristic of Polish life to its historic sources. What he did contend was that the anti-Semitism of the Polish people as a whole, and of the Polish working class especially, was greatly exaggerated in the minds of people in Western Europe and America. The role which Polish anti-Semitism has played in active political life is related, as in other countries, to the amount of encouragement or tolerance it receives from the authorities. In this sense, Rudzinski's view that the revival of active anti-Semitism is the result of artificial stimulation through Stalinist channels does not deny the prior existence of anti-Semitism among the people, especially the petty bourgeoisie.

Nor does existence of Jews in prominent posts of the Stalinist regime preclude an anti-Semitic role on the part of the latter. We need but read the record of the Nazi occupation in Poland to realize that among the Jews, as among all peoples, were found those elements who faithfully served as Gestapo agents even though they knew that they were assisting in the extermination of their own people. The Jewish police of the Ghetto continued to carry out the task of rounding up the deportees for the death camps even when their own families were no longer immune, according to Marek Edelman in *The Ghetto Fights*. Why should we expect protests from Jews in the Warsaw regime who are either old-time Stalinist hacks, devoid of any moral concepts other than those of the Kremlin machine, or broken-down and exhausted ex-reformists who want nothing but the peace and security they hope for in a government post?

Trotsky has had occasion to refer to the fact that Stalin was not above utilizing undercover anti-Semitism in his fight against the Opposition, especially where the continual reference to the Jewish names of prominent Oppositionists and their alleged anti-peasant program would line up support for Stalin in the countryside. The following quotation is of interest in this regard:

"On February 27th in Jerusalem the Jewish daily, *Hadashot Haerew*, denounced the growth of anti-Semitism in the USSR. The Soviet authorities appear to 'object to this anti-Semitism, but in reality the Jews see themselves passed over in a thousand ways. For instance, entry to the schools which train Soviet diplomats is practically barred to Jews, as only persons originating from the National Republics are admitted. In practice, people have to be of Russian origin to be considered as originating from a National Republic. In the domain of literature and the cinema, frequently subjects are chosen which are likely to evoke the old anti-Semitic prejudices. For instance, it has become a popular theme to extol Bohdan Chmielnicki on the screen and in books. It is well known that Bohdan Chmielnicki, who lived in the 16th century in the Ukraine, ardently persecuted the Jews.

"That anti-Semitism survived in Russians who have known the old regime is a phenomenon by itself; but the fact that it also exists among the younger generation is even more astonishing. It is true that the awakening of a certain anti-Semitism seems called forth by recent press and film propaganda.

"'Naturally this novel form of anti-Semitism provokes reactions among the Jews of the USSR. That is why, for instance, no more mixed marriages are being contracted.'" (*East Europe*, March 12, 1947, London.)

Without knowing the political tendency of *Hadashot Haerew* nor the accuracy of their reference to mixed marriages, we know from the whole trend of Russian nationalism and Great Russian chauvinism that Stalinism is not at all immune to the practices referred to. Who would deny that in a period of crisis the Kremlin would not resort to pogrom as a means of diverting mass discontent that would threaten the regime, even as the Czars did? The last

thing that would stand in the way of those who have the blood of millions of innocent people on their hands would be moral scruples. Then why is it not likely that the Stalinist machine in Poland, where it confronts a mass opposition, engineers events like the Kielce pogroms for its own political purposes? To determine the role of NSZ bands from the forests or to analyze the extent of anti-Semitism among people is important. But it must not obscure the fact that the prime guilt is upon the heads of the Warsaw regime.

Findley's challenge to Rudzinski "to cite specific acts of material aid to the Warsaw ghetto fighters" on the part of the Polish underground reveals an astounding lack of information about the Ghetto uprising on the part of one whose contributions in the pages of our press have been so rich in factual material on Jewish political problems. All accounts of the Ghetto battle establish that the Ghetto fighters were armed entirely from the outside. Their chief supplies of arms, as well as military instructors and advisers, came from the underground Polish Socialist Party.

Mary Berg's *Warsaw Ghetto*, written as a diary of her experiences as an inhabitant of the Ghetto and an internee in a Ghetto prison, speaks bitterly about the failure of the Polish population to give more aid to the Jewish victims of their common oppressor. Her bitterness seems restrained when one considers the circumstances under which she wrote it. Yet one must weigh the failure of more Poles to conceal Jews in their homes at the risk of their own lives (and the hiding of someone in a city apartment for years is not easy) against the operation of this same instinct of self-preservation among the Jews themselves, above all the hostility of the Jewish community during its first two years against those in its midst who carried on a counter-terror against the Gestapo. Their hostility was born of a fear of Gestapo reprisals against the community as a whole. But even Mary Berg's account, that of a young, unpolitical observer, repeatedly exonerates the Polish working class movement from her accusations against the Polish population at large.

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